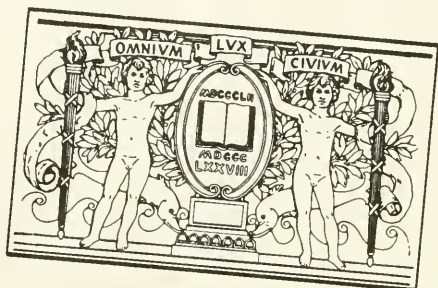


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R. I. General assembly; Committee
Narragansett Indians: 1879.
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

NARRAGANSETT TRIBE OF INDIANS.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION;

A HISTORICAL SKETCH,

AND

EVIDENCE TAKEN,

MADE TO THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

AT ITS

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1880.

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1880.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
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RESOLUTION

PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT ITS JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1879.

Upon the petition of Gideon Ammons, President of the Indian Council, and others, Members of the Council and Tribe of Narragansett Indians, living in the town of Charlestown, presented to the House of Representatives at the January Session of 1879, praying that a committee be appointed to investigate the affairs of said Tribe; the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

Resolved, That a select committee of three be appointed to inquire into the justice, expediency, and practicability of abolishing the tribal relations of the Narragansett Indians; of conferring the rights of citizenship upon the members thereof; of the most equitable manner of disposing of the land belonging to said tribe, etc., and report at the next January Session of the General Assembly, or sooner if possible.

Subsequently, Messrs. Dwight R. Adams, of Warwick, George Carmichael, Jun., of Richmond, and George B. Carpenter, of Hopkinton, were appointed as said Committee.

REPORT.

To the Honorable, the House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations :

Your committee, to whom was referred the resolution of the House of Representatives, passed at the January Session, (February 18,) A. D., 1879, and the several petitions and other papers before the House, relating to the affairs of the tribe of Narragansett Indians, living in Charlestown, desire to submit the following report :—

Your committee have given three public hearings, to wit: at the Indian Meeting House, in Charlestown, Wednesday, July 30, 1879 ; in Card's Hall, Cross' Mills, Charlestown, Wednesday, August 13, 1879, and again, in the Indian Meeting House, Friday, October 31, 1879.

The meetings were well attended by members of the tribe, prominent citizens of Charlestown, including a committee of conference appointed by their Town Council, people from the surrounding towns and from various parts of the State.

The subject and questions involved were discussed by members of the tribe and by citizens present from many localities, (See Report of Evidence in Appendix B.)

A fourth and final meeting with the Indian Council alone, was held in the office of George Carmichael, Jun., at Shannock Mills, Friday, December 26, A. D. 1879, which gave a satisfactory result to all present.

The evidence and thoughts obtained at the several meetings will be considered as follows—the tribe and its extinction ; the tribal or va-

cant lands ; the population ; the annual appropriations and the public schools ; their moral condition ; their legal rights to be secured ; and an *act* incorporating certain changes relating to the sale of the vacant lands, citizenship, etc.

We learn that there is not a person of pure Indian blood in the tribe, and that characteristic features, varying through all the shades of color, from the Caucasian to the Black race, were made manifest at the several meetings of the Committee. Their extinction as a tribe has been accomplished as effectually by nature as an *Act* of the General Assembly will put an end to the name. There will evidently be a feeling of regret when the name of a tribe so long known in the history of our State passes from existence.

The reservation, as bounded A. D. 1709, (See historical sketch, Appendix A,) was eight miles square, and contained sixty-four square miles; less than one quarter of which is now in the possession of the natives. The property of the tribe may be classed as private and public. Nearly every head of a family upon the reservation lives upon individual property, inherited, or held by deed. This comprises the best of the land except "Fort Neck." With this class of property we have nothing to do. The public land is said to contain about fifteen hundred acres, comprising the cedar swamp of seven hundred acres, Watchaug, containing eighty acres, Fort Neck, twenty acres, and the remainder in different localities of the town. The income from this land is of little value, and the only advantage derived therefrom is the right of cutting timber in the swamp. For this right members of the tribe are taxed by the Council ; this tax is their only income, except the rent of Fort Neck ; both averaging an annual rentage of, perhaps, fifty dollars. These public lands, at present, are worth but little, and as they lie idle and unproductive, their income is necessarily small.

The total population on the reservation is one hundred and nineteen, with twenty-six heads of families. This number may be somewhat decreased in summer, as the men find employment abroad, and increased in winter, as they return. Many of the most intelligent and enterprising find employment and homes in other places ; and in many instances are voters, and possessed of property of value.

The annual appropriation of three hundred dollars by the State has failed to accomplish its intended work, as the inhabitants of the reservation manifest no interest in the assigned purposes of the money. The practical failure of the Indian school illustrates this fact. The school house is in ruins, the attendance was small and irregular. The school has been discontinued by vote of the Council, and a few of the pupils now attend the public schools in the town, where they have the same advantages as the white children, and the same incentives for improvement.

Morally, the tribal relation exercises a pernicious influence, and encourages pauperism and vagabondism. Could this idle and thriftless community be changed, within a decade of years, to an enterprising, industrious, and prosperous one, the value of the improvement would be of great price. Concerning this change it has been said that a number of paupers will be thrown upon the town. These being wards of the State should be placed upon the State farm. But there is no reason to suppose that the Indians will be less able to care for themselves when enfranchised, than they now are, and it is thought that the amount of property brought under taxation will overbalance extra expenses from this source.

If the tribal relations be abolished, all natural and legal rights should be given the Indians, with a revision and confirmation of the same by our Supreme Court. The State holds the guardianship of them, and in taking action for their freedom should deal with them *justly* and *generously*, and they will soon learn to care for themselves. "It cannot and must never be said, with truth, that the Narragansetts, as a tribe, have been illy treated by the whites. Both under English and American rule, as wards of the colony and of the State, they have been protected, nourished, and aided, with generous and Christian care. Want of greater success in these efforts must be attributed to a want of disposition and capacity in the Indian stock."

At the meeting with the Indian Council, December 26, 1879, an agreement on the part of said Council, was made, that in behalf of the tribe, they would quit-claim to the State, the interest of said tribe in

the common, tribal, or vacant lands, and all other tribal rights and claims, for the sum of five thousand dollars. It is the firm opinion of your Committee that the State should complete the purchase. The State will lose comparatively nothing, financially, by the transaction.

In view of these facts and considerations, we submit the accompanying ACT, which, in its terms and provisions embodies the recommendations of your Committee in the premises, for a final solution of the question, and recommend its adoption.

Respectfully submitted,

DWIGHT R. ADAMS, Chairman,	}	Committee.
GEORGE CARMICHAEL, JUN., Secretary,		
GEORGE B. CARPENTER.		

APPENDIX A.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE NARRAGANSETT INDIAN TRIBE.

The gravity of the subject under consideration, and the interests at stake, form sufficient reasons for presenting a historical sketch of the

NARRAGANSETT INDIANS.*

The European explorers and early settlers on the Atlantic coast found the Algonquin family of the Indian race occupying, with few exceptions, the greater part of the territory now included in the United States, and lying east of the Mississippi. The Narragansetts occupied the territory west of the Narragansett Bay. We are to consider the aborigines who lived in the southwestern part of Rhode Island. This region was known to the Indians as Misquamicut, and is now occupied by the townships of Westerly, Charlestown, Richmond, and Hopkinton. These four were included within the original boundaries of Westerly, which was incorporated in May, 1669, as the fifth town in

* In preparing this sketch, copious extracts have been made from *Westerly and its Witnesses*, by Rev. Frederic Denison. A *Historical Sketch of Charlestown*, by William F. Tucker, and De Forest's *History of the Indians of Connecticut*, have also been quoted. Vol. 1, of Governor Arnold's *History of Rhode Island* has been consulted, and the curious reader is referred to *Potter's Early History of Narragansett*, and *Uptike's History of the Narragansett Church*.

the colony. Three tribes have, at different times, claimed the jurisdiction of this region—the Niantics, the Pequots, and the Narragansetts. Before the Europeans reached our shores, the Niantics occupied the coast from Weccapaug, now in Charlestown, west to the Connecticut river, and north, back from the coast, twenty-five or thirty miles. The Niantics were comparatively mild and peaceful. The powerful Pequots made a descent from northeastern New York, near the head of the Hudson, seized most of the Niantic territory, and nearly destroyed the old tribe. They were first known to the Europeans as the Eastern Niantics and Western Niantics. The eastern remnant of the tribe held Misquamicut; the western remnant occupied a tract in southeastern Connecticut, now known as the town of Lyme.

Rev. Frederic Denison, in his excellent history of Westerly, says: “The Eastern Niantics, in their weak and exposed state, confederated with the old and famous Narragansett tribe, with whom they ever after remained as tributaries, till the fall of Philip and the death of their last Sachem, Canonchet. Their proper bounds extended from Pawcatuck river to Weccapaug on the coast, and reached back into the forests about thirty miles. Their stronghold, or fort, was near Weccapaug. Their sachems, or kings, were the celebrated Ninigrets.”

The Pequots aimed to expel the Eastern Niantics. They were met by the united Narragansetts and Niantics in April, 1632, and in a fierce struggle, “extended their territory ten miles east of the Pawcatuck.” The Pequots were the most warlike tribe in New England.

Denison’s Westerly describes the Narragansetts as follows: “This famous tribe, anciently holding jurisdiction over the most of the present State of Rhode Island, able, in their palmy days, under Canonieus and Miantonimo, to call to the field about four thousand warriors, had rule over Misquamicut only through their allies, or confederates, the Niantics. By this coalition, however, the sceptre of the Narragansetts virtually extended to the Pawcatuck. By our annalists, and in all our general historians, the Narragansetts and Niantics have been treated as one and the same nation. Indeed, after the great swamp fight in Kingstown, in 1675, which virtually closed King

Philip's war, and utterly broke the sceptre of the Narragansetts as well, the tribes were substantially consolidated, and ever afterward treated as one people by the colonists. Hence, the *remnant of the two tribes now lingering on their reservation in Charlestown, though on Niantic soil, and embracing the Niantics, is commonly spoken of as the Narragansett Tribe*. The Niantics stood aloof from Philip's conspiracy, and therefore suffered but little in the bloody campaign. *The Indians on the reservation were largely Niantics, and their name should have been retained.*" The Montauk tribe possessed the east end of Metoac, or Long Island. They were concerned with the Manissos, of Block Island and the Niantics, chiefly by predatory excursions. Wyandance was the notable sachem of the Montauks. Says Denison, "With this king, through his sub-sachem, or chief Ascassassatic, the Niantic King, Ninigret, had a war in 1664. The Montauks had killed some of the Niantics. Ninigret achieved some retaliation. Wyandance then inflicted a blow upon Ninigret's men on Block Island, where the chiefs had agreed on a friendly visit." Of this feud Roger Williams says, "The cause and root of all the present mischief is the pride of the two barbarians, Ascassassatic, the Long Island sachem, and Ninigret, of the Narragansetts; the former is proud and foolish, the latter is proud and fierce." Ninigret was the victor in this struggle. The first settlers of Connecticut took the Long Island Indians under their protection and sent messengers to Ninigret demanding peace. Ninigret answered, "The Long Island Indians began the war, killed one of my sachem's sons, and sixty men. If your Governor's son were slain, and several other men, would you ask counsel of another nation how and when to right yourself?" Major Willard was sent against Ninigret with a force of two hundred and seventy-four foot and forty horse. Ninigret secured himself and men, including many Pequots, in a swamp, and the whites were forced to return unsuccessful. De Forest says 136 Pequots left Ninigret and came to Major Willard's camp for protection. Ninigret had a fort, but it was not calculated to meet the assault of the English. The swamp referred to, was doubtless the cedar swamp in Westerly, near Burden's Pond. The first Ninigret known to the colonists Denison describes as follows: "He

was reported to be of Pequot origin, and was ever true to his pagan training. Possibly on account of his Pequot blood, but more probably from his dread of the Pequot power, he was at first reluctant to render assistance to Major John Mason in his expedition of 1637,* against the Pequot stronghold on Pequot Hill" (now in the town of Groton, in southeastern Connecticut.). From the letters of Roger Williams, (Mass. Hist. Coll., Vol. VI, fourth series,) it appears that Ninigret had an *alias*, this was Juanemo, by which title he is repeatedly mentioned. Mr. Williams mentions him as one of the 'chiefe sachems,' a 'chiefe souldier,' and a 'notable instrument' among the nations. His portrait, which was secured during a visit to Boston in 1647, is in possession of the Winthrop family, and an engraving from this may be found in Drake's *History of Boston*, and will also be found in Denison's *Westerly and its Witnesses*. "He haughtily resisted all the impressions of European civilization, and when asked to favor the preaching of Christianity among his people, he coolly replied, that it would be better to preach it among the English till they brought

* Says De Forest, in his *History of the Indians of Connecticut*,—"They moved along a forest path much travelled by the natives, but rough and difficult to white men; and after marching, as it seemed to them, 18 or 20 miles, they came to a place called Nehantic. Here stood a fort, built as a protection against the Pequots; and here lived one of the Narragansett sachems, probably the same who was afterwards so well known to the whites under the name of Yanemo, or Ninigret. On the march, Indian warriors flocked into the army, until, when it reached Nehantic, it was attended by as many as 2000 Narragansetts. The Nehantics were, at first, cool and suspicious, and would allow none of the English to enter the fort. Mason's indignation was excited by their haughtiness and inhospitality; and, suspecting them of hostile feelings, he feared they would send notice of his coming to the enemy. 'Since none of us may come in,' said he, 'none of you shall go out;' and he fulfilled his threat by posting sentinels around the fort, who kept them all penned up till morning. This line of march was along the "old Indian path."

Mason marched from near Wickford to Westerly, and came to the *Niantic Fort*, on Fort Neck, perhaps 80 rods southwest of Cross' Mills. The land had steep banks on the south side, and projected into Pawagot pond. It was square and contained three-fourths of an acre. There were three bastions, twenty feet square, at the three angles. The main entrance was on the south corner, near the pond, where there was no bastion.

"Many Nehantics," says De Forest, "also joined Mason's command." But on the day of the attack on Fort Hill, (Friday, June 5, 1637,) Wequash, a Nehantic sachem, with Uncas, were the only ones who dared come near. The other Indians surrounded the fort at a distance. In this case the Narragansetts witnessed the destruction of the Pequots; just as the Mohegans and Pequots witnessed their destruction some 38 years later, in the great swamp fight of 1675.

De Forest calls Wequash "the first convert to the Christian faith among the aborigines of New England." John Winthrop says, "He attained to a good knowledge of the things of God and salvation by Jesus Christ." He was visited, during his last sickness, at Saybrook, Conn., in 1642, by Roger Williams. The father of Wequash was Momojoshuck, but as Yanemo, or Ninigret, became sachem, it is supposed that his brother, Wequash, was not of the blood royal. It is supposed that the mother of Wequash was a Pequot woman.

forth its good fruits." The feud between Wyandance and Ninigret resulted in a battle near Watch Hill, in which the Montauk host was nearly annihilated. Ninigret then embarked for Metoac, where, finding the tribe of Wyandance unprepared and powerless, he greatly weakened them by slaughter and devastation. He returned with much booty, especially wampum, and shells to be carved into wampum. Montauk was regarded as an Eldorado. De Forest, in his history of the Indians of Connecticut, tells us that "Long Island was famous for producing an abundance of shells, and was even called on that account, Sewan Hackey, or the land of shells."

While the Mannisses were under the Pequots, tradition informs us, that, in a war between them and the Narragansetts, a princess of the Narragansetts, or Ninigrets, was made a prisoner, and carried to the island. She was redeemed through the aid of Thomas Stanton, the celebrated interpreter. He had a trading house near the ford of the Paweatuck, and possessed a large quantity of Indian money. The natives were obliged to apply to Stanton for wampum. For fathoms of this coin the Indians gave him a tract of land now in Charlestown. The captive was ransomed and brought home from Mannisses with great ceremony and rejoicing. This event occurred about 1655. "Sosoa, or Sassawwaw, a renegade Pequot, promoted by Miantonimo for the conspicuous part which he had taken in some war between the Narragansetts and Pequots, received, in consideration thereof, a title or deed of Misquamieut from Miantonimo and Ninigret. This title he afterwards transferred to the first settlers of Westerly," in 1661. Of this chief, Sosoa, Roger Williams, in 1637, in a letter to Governor John Winthrop, mentions that he deserted his native tribe, the Pequots, and became Miantonimo's "special darling and a kind of General of his forces." "He first turned to the Narrhiggansicks, and againe pretends to return to the Pequots." Of the religion of the aborigines of Rhode Island, Roger Williams wrote, February 28, 1638, (N. S.,) as follows: "They have plenty of gods, or divine powers; the Sun, Moone, Fire, Water, Earth, the Deere, the Beare, etc. I brought home, lately, from the Narrhiggansicks, the names of thirty-eight of their gods, all they could remember." Denison says, "They made no

images; their divinities were ghosts; they were extreme spiritualists. Every element and material and object had its ruling spirit, called a god, or Manitou. These divinities seemed ever passionate and engaged in war with each other; hence the passionate and warlike character of the worshippers. They adored not intelligence and virtue, but power and revenge. Every person was believed to be under the influence of some spirit, good or evil, that is weak or strong, to further the person's desires. These spirits, or Manitous, inhabited different material forms, or dwelt at times in them. The symbolic signature employed by sachems and chiefs, in signing deeds, represented, in many cases, the forms inhabited by their guardian or inspiring spirits; these were bows, arrows, birds, fishes, beasts, reptiles and the like."

The Indians also had superior gods, one of good and one of evil. The Indian hoped, at his death, that he might reach the sunny fields and happy hunting grounds of the great spirit. But they held that bad Indians would be condemned to cold, dark, and barren regions.

The Indian name, Misquamicut, signifying salmon, was given to the neck of land near Watch Hill, near the mouth of the river, and afterwards embraced the country to the north and east of Weccapang. It has been mentioned that this country was purchased by the whites in 1661. From that time the history of the Niantics is more readily traced. The whites purchased Ninigret's neutrality during King Philip's war, in 1675, and "for his treachery to his paramount sovereign and race, the tribe land in Charlestown was allotted to him and his heirs forever."

Tucker's *Historical Sketch of Charlestown*, from which the above quotation is made, continues as follows: "The Ninigret tribe never were the real Narragansetts, whose name they bear. It is a libel on their glory and on their name to have assumed it. Not one drop of the blood of Canonieus, Mantonimo, or Canonehet, ever coursed in the veins of a sachem who could sit neuter in his wigwam and hear the guns and see the conflagration ascending from the fortress that was exterminating their nation forever." The alliance of Ninigret with the Narragansett rulers had been both political and domestic. He was tributary to Canonieus, Miantonimo, and his successors, and

collaterally related to the family of Canonicus by the marriage of his sister Quaiapen to Maxauno, the son of Canonicus. When Canonchet, the son of the brave, but unfortunate, Miantonimo, and the last sachem of the ill-fated Narragansetts, was captured, near the Blackstone River, in the Spring of 1676, the sceptre of the allied Narragansett and Niantic tribes devolved upon Ninigret. He died soon after the close of King Philip's war. From him descended the subsequent rulers of the united tribes, since popularly designated the Narragansetts. Ninigret had two wives. By one he had a daughter, and by the other, a son, Ninigret, and two daughters. On Ninigret's death, the daughter by the first wife succeeded him. She was crowned at Chemunganock, now known as Shumuncanuc, Charlestown. This queen was succeeded by Ninigret, her half-brother. At the session of the General Assembly, held in Providence, October 27, 1708, Weston Clark, John Mumford, of Newport, Philip Tillinghast, of Providence, Joseph Burden, of Portsmouth, Richard Greene, of Warwick, and Capt. John Eldred, of Kingstown, were appointed a committee to agree with Ninigret, "what may be a sufficient competence of land for him and his people to live upon," and to view the state of the Narragansett country. In March, 1709, they reported that they found a great deal of land in the country there to be very poor, and some very good; also, that they had agreed with Ninigret, and that he had by a deed, dated March 28, 1709, quit-claimed to the colony all Indian lands whatever, except a tract bounded as follows: "Beginning where the brook that Joseph Davill's mill standeth,* and runs into the great salt pond, and so, from said brook, on a straight line northerly to Pesquamsent Pond, and by the brook that runs out of Pesquamscut Pond into Pawcatuck River, and so along by Pawcatuck River west-

* Old Ninigret gave to the colony a quit-claim deed of all the vacant lands, except a tract bounded as aforesaid: "Beginning at the mouth of Cross' Mill brook, (anciently known as Davill's,) where it empties into the salt pond, and thence, from said brook, on a straight line northerly to Pasquescett Pond, and thence along Pasquescett Brook until it joins the Pawcatuck River at Kenyon's Mills; thence along said river, westward, to Benjamin Burdick's bridge, (more recently called Brown's bridge, at Burdickville;) and thence southerly, towards Wequopogue, a stream running into Quonocontaug Pond, a little to the west of Quonocontaug Neck, and thence to the Post Road; and then following said road eastward to Christopher Champlin's dwelling house, or very near it; and from thence south to the salt pond, and so along the shore of said pond to the first mentioned bound.—[From Tucker's *Charlestown*, 1876.

ward until it comes to Benjamin Burdick's bridge, and from thence, southerly, towards Wequopogue, until it meets the grand road, and so along by said road, eastward, until it comes near to Christopher Champlain's new dwelling house, and from thence, south, to the great pond or salt water, and so along by the pond side to the first mentioned bounds, as it is drawn upon the draught of the vacant lands." (St. Rec. L. E., 3. 273.) This reservation contained 64 square miles. Ninigret's will is dated 1716-17. He died about 1722, and left two sons, Charles and George Augustus Ninigret. The former succeeded as sachem. Dying, he left an infant son, Charles, "who was acknowledged as sachem by a portion of the tribe, but the greater part adhered to George, his uncle, as being of pure Royal blood." Different white people, who wished to obtain an influence over the tribe, and to buy their lands, encouraged the dispute, which was ended by the death of Charles. George Augustus received the Royal belt of peace and the other royal insignia in 1735. He left a widow and three children, Thomas, George, and Esther. September 6, 1750, Sarah George, an Indian woman, the widow and Queen Dowager of George (Augustus) Ninigret, deceased, was married to John Anthony, an Indian, in St. Paul's Church, in Narragansett, by Dr. McSparran. No objection was made to the marriage. Thomas Ninigret, better known as King "Tom," was born in 1736, and succeeded as sachem in July, 1746. He was then but ten years of age, and was sent by his nation to England, where he received a common school education. On his return from school he brought a draft of a house with him. Soon after the structure, known as the Sachem house, was built, in which King Tom passed the remainder of his days. It is said he was a large, fleshy man, and that he was idle and intemperate. His wife and only son, Thomas Ningret, left him and went west. While King Tom was sachem, much of the Indian land was sold, and many of the tribe emigrated to New York, and joined the Indians there. The great revival, previous to 1750, had won happy fruits in this tribe. The Indian Church was planted in 1750. It is said that King Tom was a friend of teachers and churches. Says Denison, "King Tom yielded somewhat to the light that shone around him. In 1764, the

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sent a Mr. Bennett, as a teacher to the Indians, and furnished him with books. His labors were so successful that in the following year King Tom petitioned the society to establish free schools for the children and closed his letter with the following beautifully expressed hope, "That when time with us shall be no more; that when we and the children, over whom you have been such benefactors, shall leave the sun and stars, we shall rejoice in a far superior light." "Thus the light from above had touched his vision. The door of access for Mr. Bennett and the school had been prepared long before by the labors of Roger Williams and others." King Tom died either in the latter part of 1769, or in the early part of 1770. Very soon after his death, a considerable portion of the lands of the tribe was sold to defray his expenses. His mansion was sold to Nathan Kenyon, and from him it descended to his son, James, and grandson, James Nichols Kenyon, who is the present owner. As King Tom's son died before his father, and George, his brother, being also deceased, their sister, Esther, was the next heir to the crown. She married Thomas Sachem, and was crowned about 1770. The rock on which she stood is about twelve rods north of the "King Tom mansion." It projects about three feet above the ground, is isolated, and well adapted for such an occasion, and has become famous for this event.

About 1840, William Kenyon, of Charlestown, (deceased some five years since,) made a statement to Hon. Wilkins Updike, concerning the coronation, as follows: "I saw her crowned over seventy years ago. She was elevated on a large rock so that the people might see her; the council surrounded her. There were present about twenty Indian soldiers with guns. They marched her to the rock. The Indian nearest to the Royal blood, in presence of her counsellors, put the crown on her head. It was made of cloth covered with blue and white peage. When the crown was put on the soldiers fired a Royal salute, and huzzared in the Indian tongue. The ceremony was imposing, and everything was conducted with great order. Then the soldiers waited on her to the house, and fired salutes. There were

five hundred natives present, besides others. Queen Esther left one son, named George; he was crowned after the death of his mother. I was one of the jury of inquest (continued Mr. Kenyon,) that sat on the body of George. He was twenty-two years old when he was killed. He was where some persons were cutting trees. One tree had lodged against another, and in cutting that one it fell, and caught against a third, and George, undertaking to escape, a sharp knee struck him on the head and killed him; a foot either way would have saved him. No king was ever crowned after him, and not an Indian of whole blood now remains in the tribe." The place where George Sachem was killed is about sixty rods north of the school house pond, and at nearly the same distance from the "child-crying-rocks."

Since the death of George Ninigret the tribe has been governed by an annually elected governor, or president, and a council of four members. At what time the Indian Council was established does not appear. It was probably a notion of their own, in imitation of their white neighbors. It was in existence as far back as October, 1770. Since 1707, however, the tribe, and the reservation of lands, have been virtually under the jurisdiction of the State, as the kings and councils would act only with the consent of the State authorities. But while their actions have thus harmonized with the State legislature, their government is all their own. As they understand it, they are connected with the State by treaty, receiving certain privileges and protections in consideration of granted lands under their old sovereignty. Election day in March, and their annual religious meeting in August, are the great days of the tribe. Their manners, however, like their blood, have undergone great changes from their intermingling with Europeans and Africans. By the report of a committee, in January, A. D. 1833, it appears there were then one hundred and ninety-nine of the tribe residing in Charlestown, and fifty or more supposed to be absent. Very few of these were of full blood. In addition to the tribal lands, individual members of the tribe own large tracts according to their usages, confirmed to them by law, and which they cannot sell except by permission of the Legislature. Since October, 1838 the State has annually supported a school among

them; and since 1840, a commissioner has been annually appointed, whose services are paid by the State, to watch over their interests. A committee, to whom was referred the joint resolution of the General Assembly, passed June, A. D., 1836, reported in 1839. They commented on trespasses committed on the Indian lands by the whites; of the free sale of said lands at different times; and on the right of membership of the tribe. On this last point they reported that the only legislative action may be found in "An Act for Regulating the Affairs of the Narragansett tribe of Indians in this State," passed February 7, 1792, which regulates the right of voting for the council. "It is further voted and resolved that all the males of said tribe, of twenty-one years of age, shall and may meet together at the school house, their accustomed place of meeting, on the last Tuesday in March, A. D. 1792, and annually, and every year on that day, for the purpose of electing their Council, which shall be chosen by a majority of votes, and that in such meetings, and all others, and upon all occasions, every male person of twenty-one years, born of an Indian woman belonging to said tribe, or begotten by an Indian man belonging thereto, of any other than a negro woman, shall be entitled to vote."

Concerning a Treasurer they reported as follows: "The Committee do not know of any Act providing for or regulating the appointment of a Treasurer of the tribe. In June, 1792, Enoch Crandall was recommended to the Assembly by the tribe for that office, and was appointed. The Treasurers were afterwards appointed by special Acts of the Assembly, for no definite period of time—probably until they became too poor to need one." In connection with this office they reported that "the present Act, for preventing trespasses on Indian lands by white people, is of no effect, as it requires actions therefor to be commenced in the name of the 'Treasurer of the tribe,' and there is now no such officer." The Treasurer generally acted as a sort of overseer of the tribe, but since the discontinuance of the office the Indian Council has had the management of affairs.

"The state of morals among the Indians has, for many years, been very low, and it has had a debasing effect upon many of the white peo-

ple near them. The people of their neighborhood will, undoubtedly, rejoice to have them better educated, and their morals, if possible, improved, as the only way of correcting the evils they must otherwise suffer from, in consequence of their presence." "The laws prohibiting suits for debts against the Indians, are complained of by many. There have always been laws in the Statute book protecting them to a greater or less degree against suits. The first was probably passed in May, 1718, which was extended to all Indians, but was partially repealed in 1724." In 1858, the Narragansetts enrolled 138 members. A committee, consisting of Messrs. Sheffield, Perry, and Mowry, of the House, and Messrs. Champlin and Kenyon, on the part of the Senate, was raised to inquire into the propriety of withdrawing the guardianship of the State from this tribe, and of disposing of their public lands. Their report recites some important facts in the history of the tribe. They reported that "about two thousand acres of their tribal lands are held by individual members of the tribe as their separate estate. Their titles were derived, originally, from the tribe, and rest upon tradition. The Council grant the titles. Their mode of grant is interesting. The Council go with the grantee upon the lot proposed to be granted. After the lot is marked out and bounded, the Council cut a rod and place it upon the bare head of the grantee, and while he is upon the land, and under the rod, they administer to him a solemn oath of allegiance to the tribal authority. This mode of investiture of title bears a considerable analogy to the old common law, *livery of seizin*, and if this Indian custom antedates the landing of the Pilgrims, it might be suggested that there is a possibility that there was a community of origin in the two modes of grant." "The tribe maintain their poor and support public worship, and the State supports their school. The tribe numbers fifty-eight males and seventy-five females; in all one hundred and thirty-three. They own, in all, about three thousand acres of land in the centre of the town of Charlestown."

It is said that the Indians had no written records previous to 1849. It is unnecessary to refer to the report of the present committee in this place. Thus have we presented our available materials for a

sketch of the Narragansetts from the time of the arrival of the first Europeans, down to the present. We have travelled over more than two centuries of time. Though errors and omissions undoubtedly exist in what has been presented, it is hoped that this sketch is, in the main, correct. We first beheld this region a wilderness, the home of the red men ; next we saw small ships from another land, bringing the white men for trade and settlement. Soon Roger Williams gained an asylum among the Indians ; Misquamicent is purchased by the whites ; King Philip's war is followed by the pipe of peace. The old French wars succeeded each other, followed by the great revival, the revolutionary war and the organization of the United States. The progress of the whites during the past century has been wonderful. When our forefathers were driven into the wilderness by persecution, they were kindly received and nourished by the ancestors of the Narragansett tribe. They were then few and weak, the Indians many and strong. The condition of their descendants is now most emphatically reversed ; the one has become numerous as the sands of the seashore—the other, few and feeble. Not a pure blooded Indian now remains. “A subtle decay seems to be in the Indian nature, and it is only too evident that this remnant of the hordes of the forest must soon follow their fathers to the land of forgetfulness.” To continue the quotation from Denison : “Of the old pride and power of the Indian kings and warriors, only their mouldering sepulchres now remain. The royal burying-ground of most ancient date is located in Charlestown, about a mile north of Cross's Mills, on a piece of pleasant table land, near fifteen feet above the surrounding high ground. The spot is one hundred and twenty-five yards in circumference, and commands a beautiful view of the adjacent country and the sea. The natives evidently, in this case, had a choice ideal in reference to a place of burial. Royal graves were privileged above others. On this inviting plateau, in a mound one hundred feet long, thirty feet wide, and three feet high, and in the spaces around it, are the remains of the kings, queens, members of the Royal family, and chiefs of the Narragansett nation. Some of the graves are evidently very ancient.” In the summer of A. D. 1878, by order of the General Assembly, the State, after receiv-

ing a deed of half an acre of the above described plateau, erected a substantial post and rail fence of iron, five feet high, which enclosed a plat 20x100 feet, including the greater part of the graves, also a tablet of Vermont marble with the following inscription thereon : "This tablet is erected, and this spot of ground enclosed by the State of Rhode Island, to mark the place which Indian tradition identifies as the Royal burying-ground of the Narragansett Tribe, and in recognition of the kindness and hospitality of this once powerful nation to the founders of this State." Another burying-ground, containing the Ninigrets and other notable persons, is situated on Fort Neck, and is of more recent date than the above named grounds. Yet here sleep Royal personages. There are also smaller and more obscure places of burial in different localities in this region, anciently called Misquamient, that are believed to contain the remains of the aborigines. All are fast fading from view." The Indians have left us no written landmarks in their history. "Of their language there remains to us scarcely more than the names they gave to hills and brooks and rivers."

" We children of a favored day,
Inheriting their homes,
Would guard their history from decay,
And mark their mouldering tombs."

APPENDIX B.

EVIDENCE TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION, ON THE NARRAGANSETT TRIBE OF INDIANS, AT THREE PUBLIC MEETINGS, HELD IN THE TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN, 1879.

Reported by George W. Millard, Stenographer.

FIRST MEETING.

The Committee, consisting of Messrs. Dwight R. Adams, of Warwick, George Carmichael, Jr., of Richmond, and George B. Carpenter, of Hopkinton, appointed by the House of Representatives to inquire into the condition of the Narragansett Indians, having in view the question of abolishing their tribal authority and conferring upon them the rights of citizenship, met at the Indian meeting-house, in Charlestown, on Wednesday, July 30th, 1879. Mr. Adams opened the meeting as follows:—

MR. ADAMS.—The origin of this commission arose last winter from a petition sent up to the General Assembly, signed by Gideon Ammons, President of the Indian Council, and other men and women, members of the Narragansett Tribe of Indians, praying for a committee to investigate their affairs in reference to the encroachment of the whites upon the tribal lands, and whether it was better to continue the tribe as a tribe or enfranchise them, and how it was best to proceed. We have a petition signed by Benjamin Thomas and others, and we are here to listen to any suggestions they may make, and any desires they have to offer in relation to the matter, and to report in due time to the General Assembly next winter. Perhaps some of the members of the Commission have something to say.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I will state, in addition, that there is a widespread feeling throughout the State that the existing condition of affairs in the town of Charlestown and the Narragansett tribe, arising from the continuation of the tribal system and the prolonged guardianship of the State, is injurious to the people and productive of injurious results; and it has been thought, by many of the wisest and best citizens of the State, that if you would leave the tribal system and accept citizenship your own best interests would be promoted. Measures were introduced into the General Assembly last winter, looking to that result, but protests were raised against their adoption. You ask in this petition that a committee might be sent to examine into your condition, and we are here in response to that request. We want to know if it is desirable that your authority as a separate body within the town and State, where you reside, shall cease; and we also want to know how many of you desire to become citizens, and also find out something about your reservation, the extent of your property, what it consists of, its probable value, etc.; and if there are other matters that you wish to draw our attention to, we wish to hear them. We have come to try to learn what is the best, and have no desire to disturb existing rights unless there are good reasons for so doing. To promote your best interests is the desire of the Committee.

MR. ADAMS. — I will call upon the President of the Indian Council.

GIDEON L. AMMONS, [President of the Indian Council.]—Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Committee, I was one of that petition to have this honorable committee to come, and am happy to meet you here to-day.

[Reading.] “A special committee appointed by the House of Representatives, at the January session of the General Assembly, A. D. 1879, to consider the justice and propriety of abolishing the tribal authority of the Narragansett Indians, and conferring the rights of citizenship upon the members of the tribe; also the most equitable manner of disposing of the tribal lands.”

And this is the point I am going to speak on—on the tribal lands. Now we have a reservation five rods wide, from Pawcatuck to the Indian ford on Pawcatuck River, and in order for you to get at the truth, and to learn the truth, I will come up to 1827. That will give the citizens of the State of Rhode Island fifty-one years from their independence for you to find if they have any land that goes any nearer than five rods from high-water mark; and high-water mark was placed in Governor Fenner's time where the September gale was, and I can carry you to walls that were built; and every fisherman of South Kingstown knows where there is, on George Congdon's farm, a cove that used to be called Congdon's Cove, and everywhere, where there was a wall built on the seaside, it left there this five rod, which was for the privilege of pitching our tents, and fishing, to procure a living.

Now, as it appears that the State wants to dispose of our public lands, we don't wish to stop the wheels of any business. We will sell them that land for just what it is worth. We don't expect to sell it as we used to—a great tract for a little rum. We would rather have a few greenbacks than the fire-water. The records of the State belong to the State, and if you can show me deeds that cover more land than this, I submit. Governor Harris told me that no white man could have any more land than what his deed covered; said they couldn't contend with the Indian for his land. We had our charter from England before this State had a constitution, and that was generally understood by everybody. He said two hundred years wasn't long enough to gain possession of the Indian property. I asked Governor Thurston, when he was a member of Congress, as he was coming from his farm one day—said I, “You have been Governor of the State, and now a Congressman, and now,” says I, “can possession be gained of our Indian land?” He said, “No; they couldn't gain possession as long as we are under the care of a guardianship, it was impossible to gain possession of our land.”

Well, it is generally questioned sometimes by some people to know how we came in possession of this land, whether or no the State gave

it to us, or whether or no Congress gave it to us. That paper will show you how we got possession of this land. [Hands a paper to Mr. Carmichael.] Read it all through, and while it tells you how we came by our land, it tells you how you came by your land.

[Mr. Carmichael reads the document of which the following is a copy :]

“To all Christian people before whome these presents shall come, I, Nenegrate, Chief Sachem of ye Narragansett Country, son and heir of Nenegrate, late Sachem of said country, sendeth greeting, etc.

Know ye, that whereas my father, Nenegrate, together with the other sachems of the Narragansett Country, were the right owners of the lands lying within the jurisdiction of this Colony of Rhode Island, etc., and inasmuch as since May Humphrey Atherton, and his associates, hath laid claim to said lands now lying vacant within the jurisdiction abovesaid, whereby I have been at an exceeding charge by reason of their molestations besides with great cost and charge it hath been to this, Her Majesty's, Colony of Rhode Island, etc., which amounteth almost to the value of all the lands abovesaid, and, forasmuch as I am sensible that my father, Nenegrate, (whose undoubted heir I am,) was one of the sachems that owned said land, and for that it is well known that my father stood in true allegiance to the crown of England unto his death, and forasmuch as all the other sachems being dead, it was my father's by right of longest survivorship, but he dying, and I being his undoubted heir, being sensible of my own weakness for want of learning, being altogether illiterate of those endowments which the English have, did, therefore, make choice of several honest Englishmen, whome I had faithful confidence in, being inhabitants of this Her Majesty's Colony of Rhode Island, to be my attorneys and trustees, who did, upon my behalf, solicit this honorable colony, who, after having heard my said attorneys, and also my antagonists, equally on both sides, without partiality, was graciously pleased to acknowledge me to be the heir of said Nenegrate, and to allow me the privilege of one of Her Majesty's subjects, inasmuch as my father and myself keep our allegiance to our Sovereign, and also caused a mapp of those vacant lands lying within this colony, (called by some the mortgage land,) which mapp was accepted by the honored assembly sitting at Newport, the first Wednesday of May, 1708. And forasmuch as to my own knowledge the Colony of Rhode Island hath

been at an exceeding charge about said land, even almost as much as it is worth, as aforesaid, and finding by experience that they were all along the best friends that my father and myself ever had in protection of us under their government, and for that, I, knowing my own inability, as aforesaid, and hoping for their further protection, have freely and clearly, by these presents of my own voluntary will, without any compulsion, with the advice and consent of my attorneys, resigned us from me, my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns forever, unto the Governor and company of Her Majesty's Colony of Rhode Island, and their successors, all the right and title that I have in the vacant lands bounded within the jurisdiction of this colony of Rhode Island with the privileges therein contained or appertaining. To have and to hold forever, excepting only those lands which I reserve to myselfe of the said vacant lands where I now dwell, viz : the lands, priviledges, and appurtenances, which in those bounds following : that is, beginning where the brook, that Joseph Davill's mill standeth, and runs into the Great Salt Pond, and so from said brook on a straight line, northerly, to Pesquosset Pond, and by the brook that runs out of Pesquossett Pond into Pawcatuck River, and so along the Pawcatuck River, westward, until it comes to Benjamin Burdick's bridge, and from thence southerly towards Wequopogue Brook until it meets with the grand road, and so along by said road eastward until it comes near to Christopher Champlin's new dwelling house, and from thence south to the great pond, or salt water, and so along by the pond side to the first mentioned bounds, as it is drawn out upon the draught of the vacant lands abovesaid, all which, within said bounds, I reserve to myself and my heirs forever, and do by these presents promise and engage for me and my heirs, etc., for and in consideration abovesaid never to dispose of the said land or any part thereof, without the free consent of the Governor and Company of Rhode Island, or their successors, etc. Moreover, I do freely and voluntarily engage by these presents, for me, my heirs, etc., that whatsoever land I shall dispose of within the tract I have reserved in the bounds abovesaid, that if I shall dispose of any of it, in any manner or way whatsoever, without the consent and approbation of the Governor and Company of this said colony or their successors, all that is so disposed shall be forfeited to the Governor and Company of this, Her Majesty's, Colony of Rhode Island, and the disposal shall be void to all intents and purposes.

In witness of this, my voluntary act and deed, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty-eighth day of March, in the eighth year

of Her Majesty's reign, and by the Grace of God, Queen of Great Britain, etc., *Annoque Dominus nostri*, 1709.

The marke of
NENEGRATE X SACHEM.

Signed, sealed, and delivered in The marke of Passkhanash,
presence of us, NENEGRATE'S X WIFE.

EDWARD GRAY,
SAMUEL BRADFORD,
JOHN SANFORD.

The marke of COOK X RUSTIN,	}	Indian Counsellors.
The marke of SAWASTO, X		
The marke of INDIAN X EPIRAIM,		

We the trustees of the said Nenegrate, whose hands and seals are hereunto affixed, do freely consent and give our approbation to the above written promises as witness our hands and seals the day and year above written.

WILLIAM WANTON, (s.)
JOSEPH JENCKS, JR., (s.)
WILLIAM CHAMPLIN, (s.)
THOMAS FRY, (s.)
SIMON SMITH, (s.)

Registered,

Per RICHARD WARD,

Recorder."

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Do I understand that you claim the Indian lands to be bounded as that describes?

MR. AMMONS.—We claim this reservation, and all the bounds described on the map. The map has been searched for but cannot be found, and, perhaps, was destroyed before the Indians came into possession. Article 5th of the constitution, I suppose, is as binding as it could make it on contracts. [Reads the article.]

MR. CARMICHAEL.—If you will permit me, I will say that the State proposes to fulfil its entire obligation in this matter, and all its agreements. The point that strikes me as the most important for the Committee to reach is, whether, in the altered condition of things, it would not be best for the tribe, as a people and as individuals, to abandon the tribal system, and be incorporated into the body politic as citizens of the State of Rhode Island. There is no doubt about the bargains of the past.

MR. ADAMS.—No ; you hold the land all right.

MR. AMMONS.—Then that is the point we want to drive at. Now then, the State has accused us of making a great enormous expense for them, and here is this tract of land. The railroad passes across it. They have built upon it, and don't call our property anything, but the three hundred dollars that is given to the tribe is enormous expense. Well, now then, before I become a citizen I want what belongs to me. What belongs to me is mine. Congress is the third party to settle it, and therefore I don't wish to be a citizen until this thing is settled up. We will sell it for just what it is worth. We used to be in South Kingstown, and there were a great many in Charlestown used to go down there fishing. They went down and stayed as long as their money lasted. They didn't fish much, but went down and got some rum, and stayed two or three days, and then came home, said there was fish enough in Charlestown. The tribe didn't care anything about this land. They were looking out for a living. They reserved this place on account of its fish ponds. They could get fish and dig clams, and were not afraid of starving to death ; and the reservation north of Providence was a great place for lamprey eels. They would go up there and fill up on them ; that was all they wanted. They didn't want more land, only so that they would have a chance to pitch their tents. Didn't want to be drove off.

Now then, when I come out a citizen I want to come out clear, without any trouble whatever. I don't want to go to work, when I am a citizen, and have to fight citizens. If I have any fighting to do I want to do it now. Then, when I come out, there will be no quarrel or jangle all my life about something. This is the place to straighten this thing up, while you can do it. If the State don't give us any more than they do sometimes—they used to build walls around the shore and into the surf, or on to the rocks, so that cattle couldn't go by. When these lands were sold, I suppose they claimed tribal land and all, saying that the line fence went down to the water ; but they

claimed something that wasn't theirs. They claimed our property, and now we want it ; and it is what we are here for. And your Honors can learn this fact by going into any of your Town Clerk's offices. I presume there are two Town Clerks here to-day. I won't go back any further than 1827. It went no nearer than five rods of high-water mark. High-water mark is Government waters, and we lay right on the Government waters. But that mark was made by the September gale. Our oldest records used to be the oldest members in the tribe till 1849, and the General Assembly thought we had better keep a kind of a written record. They said it was five rods, but when Governor Fenner laid it out, he laid it out five rods from where the September gale was. They went and tore down the wall there, and there is not a fisherman in South Kingstown that will tell you where the walls used to go. They have gone and put up a watering place. We had just as leave have them there, but we want pay for our land. That is what we want.

MR. ADAMS.—You keep records ?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir ; a kind of a record of what we do.

MR. ADAMS.—How long back have you got that ?

MR. AMMONS.—1849.

MR. ADAMS.—And what were the records before that ?

MR. AMMONS.—We didn't have any then.

MR. ADAMS.—They were only legends handed down ?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. By getting these books of land evidence you can find this plan that I spoke of ; and the next committee will tell you how you want to dispose of the land, as it appears that they want to get rid of our tribal lands. I submit this deed, if you have any point that you wish to bring up.

MR. ADAMS.—How many acres are there in the tribal lands ?

MR. AMMONS.—I don't know exactly. I believe Dr. Griffin made out somewhere about six hundred acres.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Have you a map of the tribal lands ?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir. He said he never had seen that map, and he supposed the map would give us a clue to all our lands outside of this one ; but he said he never had seen it, and he supposed it must have been destroyed.

MR. ADAMS.—The tribal lands adjoin this swamp ?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. We have got three or four pieces of vacant land we call it.

MR. ADAMS.—What is this swamp land worth according to your estimation ?

MR. AMMONS.—It is worth for us to get out some stuff and some firewood, etc., but to take it and put it under the hammer and sell it, I suppose it might fetch two or three dollars an acre.

MR. ADAMS.—How many acres are there of that kind ?

MR. AMMONS.—Something like four hundred.

MR. ADAMS.—What is it ? cedar, or what ?

MR. AMMONS.—There is a kind of swamp brush, hemlock, etc.

MR. ADAMS.—Do you get any profit from it ?

MR. AMMONS.—O, yes, sir. Sometimes we sell from it some poles and sticks. It is a kind of relief for the tribe when there is nothing else to do. They can take a permit from the Council, and go in there and cut out some stuff for themselves.

MR. ADAMS.—How do they get it out ?

MR. AMMONS.—Well, generally they get it out by letting somebody haul it out on shares.

MR. ADAMS.—No one can cut there except members of the tribe ?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—Mr. Carmichael couldn't cut in there ?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir ; and I couldn't without a permit of the Council.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The Council couldn't give a white man permission to cut there ?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—What are your tribal lands worth ?

MR. AMMONS.—Well, I guess a thousand dollars. Some pieces, I suppose, wouldn't fetch more than four or five dollars an acre.

MR. ADAMS.—How do the Indians hold the fee ? You have tribal lands and private lands ?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—How did they get the fee ?

MR. AMMONS.—In the first place, when it was taken up as a reservation, the sachems took what they wanted, and most of them pitched on to the sea coast ; and then it was left for the families to go around as they wanted, where the other members of the tribe hadn't gone. They went around a piece and marked it, and that has been subdivided

among their heirs right down, and that is the way we came by it ; and what was not taken out by these families is what we call public land. It is for the advantage of the tribe.

MR. ADAMS.—How many are there in the Council ?

MR. AMMONS.—Five.

MR. ADAMS.—Meet here ?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir ; meet at the school house.

MR. ADAMS.—How do they elect the Council ?

MR. AMMONS.—We generally appoint a Moderator for the time, and members nominate candidates, and if they have two they draw out a line on the dirt, and one line for the Moderator to walk on. First, the parties, and whichever men are chosen for President, stand on the line, one at one end, and the other at the other ; and then the Moderator counts, on whichever side they stand, to see which side has got the most, and that side is President.

MR. ADAMS.—Who votes ? Everybody—men and women ?

MR. AMMONS.—No ; only men when they are twenty-one. Women used to vote a good while ago, if they had a child. They would take their child in their arms and have a vote, but that is past.

MR. ADAMS.—Your Council records are public, are they ?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

JOSHUA H. NOKA. [A Member of the Council.]—Gentlemen of the Committee, to defend the rights of myself and my children, and those that are not here to defend themselves, I come here to-day, and take this opportunity to speak in regard to citizenship. Now, for me as an individual to ask to be a citizen, under the present existing circumstances, I don't see anything that would be interesting to me. For a colored man to be a citizen, he will remain about the same as at the present time. He is merely brought out in a position like this : a chance to vote for somebody, but he can't expect ever to be President of the United States, or an Attorney-General. It makes no difference how well he is qualified, he can't be put into a jury box, to be drawn as a common juror, or anything of the kind ; but if you have got a cesspool to dig out, put him in there. But to be put in a position whereby men shall be recognized as men in the position, and he is not found. Now what would be the object in throwing off the tribal authority and come out and be called a citizen, with nothing to do as a colored man ? There is no other class of beings that have the right

of franchise and stand as men, but what can be elevated to some position when they get along far enough. That is the point with me—every other being except a colored man.

Now the petition that is pending before the legislature of this State says that these tribal lands are to be surveyed and platted, and that the money was to go to the benefit of the school and paupers. Now take our cedar swamp down here, and whatever lands there are, and they can't go to work and plat that land in less than six months or a year. They can't get through with it. I don't know as they can in six months. We know the ill conveniences that there are, especially of the cedar swamp. Now if this expense is to be at the expense of the tribe, when they have got through there is not a particle left—not a dollar left. Supposing there was a cent left, the individual that has a free right into that swamp and the rest of the public lands, his right is thrown away, except he wants to be a pauper, and throw himself on the town to get a cent or two of this valuation. Now everybody doesn't desire to take that position in order to obtain the few crumbs that may be left, and it is therefore that I repudiate the disposition of being a citizen under the present circumstances.

Now then, those public lands are of some benefit at the present time, and I don't know, in regard to the rights of those lands, what would be the object of so continuing boring the tribe when they are at no expense to the white citizens of the town of Charlestown. When we have persons that are poor they are taken care of; and probably they are taken care of about as well as the citizens take care of their poor. Some would say that our poor are very poorly taken care of. We might say, "take the poor of the Town of Charlestown, and you will find them about as poorly taken care of." I have known the poor to be in certain positions in the Town of Charlestown, when they were merely citizens, *i. e.*, without any kind of possession, when a dig and a piece of johnny cake was about all they got. Now could I be a citizen to be thrown on the Town of Charlestown? Would that be my position? I would say, "God forbid." Therefore I don't desire citizenship under those conditions. I never mean to be a pauper if I live, and under those circumstances I don't wish to be a citizen; and I would fight as long as I could to keep myself from that position. If I was going to be a pauper, it seems to me that the State ought to take me anyway. I would pray for that as long as God, or anybody else, would hear the prayer. I would pray that the State should give me something to do while I lived.

Those are the reasons why I object to being a citizen under those circumstances. Why should the Narragansett tribe be willing, just for the sake of being a citizen, to throw away the rights and privileges that they now have? Secondly, here is our individual lands that we now occupy in small strips, which have been divided and subdivided until our strips become small. We have got them in various forms,—strips here and there. Now, if we were citizens, somebody would compel us to fence our lands. We can't fence them to save our lives; and if we can't fence our lands, suddenly the right must be forfeited. And now we are not obliged to fence the land that we hold.

MR. ADAMS.—Do you know where the bounds are?

MR. NOKA.—I know where the bounds of my lands are, but not the bounds of every man that has an individual right to the lands. Now then, under those circumstances, I don't wish to become a citizen. Then suppose I wish to occupy any position—that is another objection to becoming a citizen, and throwing off the tribal authority that I have now, because it looks like entering out into darkness, whereby I don't see no light that is going to shine me over. I know the position that I now occupy, and I prefer it rather than being a citizen.

MR. ADAMS.—Have you any paupers in your tribe?

MR. NOKA.—Not now. Sometimes they need a little help, but we have no paupers in the tribe now.

MR. ADAMS.—How do you manage?—sell some lands?

MR. NOKA.—No, sir; but we raise a revenue from certain lands that we have, and we calculate to raise enough from them; and they are contributory until the debt is paid, if it takes from judgment to eternity.

MR. ADAMS.—The Council manages that?

MR. NOKA.—Yes, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—Don't you suppose that every man that owns a tract of land knows the bounds?

MR. NOKA.—I don't know as they do. Sometimes families know, and it is sometimes neglected, and perhaps they wouldn't always know the lines.

MR. J. C. COLLINS.—I would like to ask if there is any tax at all?

MR. NOKA.—I am taxed on deeded property to pay a three-quarter tax. We are not taxed for paupers or outside.

MR. COLLINS.—You have no tribal tax?

MR. NOKA.—No, sir.

MR. BENJ. THOMAS. [A Member of the Council.]—May it please the Honorable Committee, I have come here to-day for myself. I, for myself, don't really understand how I should answer the question, whether I would be a citizen or not. I have been thinking, providing this guardianship should be raised, and we should become citizens, what we would be then. I can't hardly tell. I see very plain that there stands before us a great thing to do, in order to raise that guardianship and place us on a level with the men that we are talking to about it. We have a little mite of property here, and it is all the time overrated. We call the swamp, to begin with, six hundred acres, and may be a little more or less. The rest of the lands may make up three hundred. We call Fort Neck three and three-quarters, and that is the big eye-sore.

MR. ADAMS.—What do you mean by that?

MR. THOMAS.—Most everybody would like to get hold of it. If that was got rid of, and if we did as we should, and used that up, we would have no further talk about citizenship, and we would have no more persons follow us and ask us, "don't you want to be just like us?" Get rid of this public property and some of the hungry ones that want to manage it for us, and then there would be no men come before your legislature and say, "How much trouble this tribe makes us!" We hardly ever see the Commissioner, and don't know him when we see him; so that we are pretty careful whom we speak to now, for we don't know who the Commissioner is.

In order to set us on a level, as you say you will do, raise the guardianship up, and let us handle our own property. If I have any dollar in there I want it. If anybody is going to swindle and gobble it up, I think we have just as good right as anybody else. That is not what I am coming at. Now to go to work to survey this property—we know how lazy surveyors are. If it is a little cloudy, or wet in the bush, he isn't going to work. If there is a little rain he is afraid his instruments will rust, and it is a good deal of work to draught it after it is taken. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Kenyon bought the last piece on Fort Neck, and it is better land than there is left. That brought \$31.01 an acre. There is no such talk about Fort Neck bringing \$50

an acre. You can't find a man that will pay it. All real estate that we find has depreciated more than one-half. If Kenyon bought the best piece for \$31 an acre, and this has shrunk one-half, we are not going to get \$15. Put our Indian swamp at auction to-day, and it is only a mess of mud. Once I went there, and I couldn't find a single dollar's worth that I could get out of it. I couldn't get in there and cut a dollar's worth of wood, and so I went away and left it. All the property we have wouldn't be \$1,500. Now if you sent a good surveyor from the city, you couldn't get him here much short of \$15 a day.

MR. ADAMS.—I guess we could get a good engineer for \$5 a day.

MR. THOMAS. — Yes, and six months to do it in, and all his help; and then where is Fort Neck gone to. Raise this guardianship if you choose to, but let us manage this thing, and we will see what we can do with it. We can cut brush when we can't do anything else. Make men of us first, and then, if we can't manage it, take it away from us and manage it yourselves. I voted in Connecticut six years, and I knew just what I voted for. Sometimes, in town meeting, they would hunt us and say, "You supported us in Congress, and you must support us now." And I would say I guessed I should do pretty much as I wanted to; I guessed I wouldn't vote till late. To raise this guardianship, and have everything gobbled up—we are poor enough now, and will be still poorer when it is done. What good is it going to do? The time must come when this thing must go, for when we go away there is hardly anybody to fill the place. There is not four here that can go around the tribal lands and bound it. If the Council goes out to divide a piece of land, they will go there and perhaps two or three more. When I was a boy and lived here, there would be as large a crowd as here, and everybody came, and you could find the bounds; but now nobody takes any pains. We go on and do the business, and they trust to us and go right along. They think it is done right enough, and there is no crowd. But this thing has got to come, because the legislature of this State keeps crowding these lands, and say it is deeded land. We don't want this little property swept clean. Get rid of that and then there would be no trouble. Individuals go to the legislature, and if they have three acres they sell it. They have sold all around here, and, when five acre pieces have been bought, in a few years they become ten acres. Gov. Wilcox had the right idea when he bounded the Indians' lands, "more or more." Here is a marsh land over here. You find that once it was fifteen

acres, now it is twenty-five. The first purchase of the marsh was about forty acres, and now there is two hundred acres in that tract. It is a mile and a half on the road there. I must say, that I for one am not prepared to take the guardianship away unless you give us the privilege you have in this property, because you are going to do the part that we ought to do if anybody. There is a piece of land on the sea shore that was given by the Church of England. George Nene-grate didn't finish it up, and it was given to the church. That is forty acres, and it was given for the church purposes. Now they take it in for other purposes. Who does that belong too? We never have had it back again. That is a better piece of land than at Fort Neck. It lies right along by McDonald's. That was given for church purposes, and I suppose when a piece of land is given for a church they have no right to use it for any other purpose. It came from this reservation.

A VOICE.—It depends on the deeds.

MR. THOMAS.—The deed now is good enough. The old one wasn't, but they have made a good deed since.

MR. CARPENTER.—How many persons do you recognize as belonging to the tribe anywhere?

MR. THOMAS.—I think you can't tell much more about them than the sands of the sea. They are in every part of this earth, and are liable to come here any time. I calculate that there are about thirty families live up here in the Town of Charlestown now.

MR. CARPENTER.—How do they average to a family?

MR. THOMAS.—I can't tell you. They generally average pretty well. I should think, perhaps, four or five. Some run higher. Nothing less than two.

MR. CARPENTER.—How many should you think there was in the Town of Charlestown, over twenty-one—males?

MR. THOMAS.—They are out and in. I couldn't hardly guess. At August meeting they are here pretty thick.

MR. CARPENTER.—Members of the tribe are living all around here?

MR. THOMAS.—Yes, sir; even into Hopkinton.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you know whether any of them vote in their towns?

MR. THOMAS.—Yes, sir. Mr. Cross has one of my boys, and I vote for him every year.

MR. CARPENTER.—The number that would be really enfranchised wouldn't be very large?

MR. THOMAS.—No, sir. There is another difficulty. When these individuals petition to sell this land, they cut our reservation down smaller, and then they are not cut loose from this tribe. The legislature ought to make some condition on which a man can sell his land. He has to make an excuse that he wants to get money to go to Wisconsin, or some place; and let him take his land and go. Selling it, and spending the proceeds, and then hanging around here—that ought not to be so; but that is so to-day. We have got them in Wisconsin and every place.

MR. CARPENTER.—Suppose a person comes and wants to join the tribe?

MR. THOMAS.—In my day we have always told him that he couldn't. We don't like any more new ones to come in. All we want is to get the blood; don't want any grafted ones. We have got plenty of them.

DANIEL SEKATER. [A Member of the Council.]—May it please your Honors, you are here to investigate the affairs in relation to citizenship, and I am here to speak for myself and family. And I can't see for my life wherein we shall be benefitted any more than we are at the present time by coming out as citizens under the present circumstances. We have now here a little mite of property that belongs to the Narragansett Indians, conveyed to them by their foreparents, and it belongs to them; and it does seem to me that they ought to have the handling of it as they see fit. There is the Indian cedar swamp, whereby many in this tribe are benefitted by it. I am not so much as many are. If they want any wood, fencing stuff, or shingles, they can go in there and cut it; and if they come out as citizens, they will be deprived of that privilege; and there are a good many of them that now do, and perhaps would, own land against the white people, and they would compel them to fence some places; and there are very few that could do it, and their land has got to be forfeited; and I can't see that citizenship is going to do them any good. Some argue that they ought to come out as citizens because they are mixed up with others. There are niggers, it is true—perhaps more niggers than anything else. But other classes are mixed up with other nations just as well. There is hardly one that can say, "I am a clear-blooded Yankee." So I can't see whereby I should be benefitted. If I come out as a citizen I want to be benefitted. It is no use for a man to make a bargain and

trade unless it is going to benefit him in some way, and I can't see that citizenship would be worth anything to me.

MR. COLLINS.—Wouldn't you have better school facilities than you now have?

MR. SEKATER.—I don't know about that.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—If your children had a right to attend the district schools?

MR. SEKATER.—I don't know about that. They never have had any school worth anything much of late years—not at this Indian school. They don't intend the Indians shall know anything if they can prevent it.

MR. COLLINS.—Isn't there trouble about attending the school?

MR. SEKATER.—No, sir. They hire just such teachers as they want.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you mean the School Commissioners?

MR. SEKATER.—He hires just as he thinks proper, let him be a good teacher or a poor one.

MR. ADAMS.—Do your boys and girls go to school generally at some portions of the year?

MR. SEKATER.—I don't send to this school at all. My children go to Washington school house.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Do you have to pay for it?

MR. SEKATER.—No, sir. I own property in that district.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Mr. Noka, where do you send?

MR. NOKA.—I send down here.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—A good many of your people own property in their own right. How many in the town among your tribe have secured property of their own outside of the Indian land—taxable property?

MR. NOKA.—There is quite a number of them—fifteen or twenty, perhaps.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you live in the Town of Charlestown?

MR. NOKA.—I do, sir.

MR. CARPENTER.—Ever vote there?

MR. NOKA.—No, sir; I vote here. When Mr. Cross was Commissioner here, he would always take pains enough to come and ask the Council, or some of us, and we generally laid it before our meeting,

who we would like to have as teacher; but you can't find hardly another Commissioner who would even come around to ask, and if we go and visit him, and tell him that we would like to have so and so, he has always somebody else to put in. Now the Hon. Elder Weaver—I visited him, and also some of the rest of the Council, and other individuals have sent in, telling him in regard to the school, and he said, when he was first Commissioner, "You shall have the best school you ever had in the Town of Charlestown. You shall have the most schooling that you ever have had." We don't undertake to question the ability of his son, but he was sickly, and he had to travel from Carolina Mills to this school house about five or six times a week, down in the morning and back at night. By the time that he got down he was all beat out, and he couldn't teach long before he wanted to go back. Mr. Weaver says, "I will put my son in, and if he don't give satisfaction I will take him out, and put in another man." We told him we were not satisfied, but he never took him out and put in another man. He taught right straight along, and I emphatically declare that, although he taught well enough while he was there, he couldn't get there, and we have had the poorest school under his administration that we ever had. We have had very poor schools before. Mr. Frank Tucker has given the best satisfaction, and the blacksmith, Mr. Stanton, gave us a very good school. But Mr. Tucker has taken very great pains, and my children have never got along so well in education as while Mr. Tucker has had the school.

MR. ADAMS.—Who taught the school last winter?

MR. NOKA.—Mr. Weaver taught school last winter, but we had nothing all winter pretty much. The teacher would be sick, and then you couldn't tell when there would be school. He had consumption, or some other disease as bad; and we have had a very miserable school. In regard to time, we haven't had much of it. Here are some of the children that have been to school, and if these statements are not so, I hope they will be met right before your Honors at the present time. I make them as *bona fide* statements. I don't say but what his teaching was good enough, but he couldn't be there but a very little time. I won't say but as citizens we must have a better school than we have had, if we have anything. This school could be carried on in right shape if people came right up to the touchstone and tried to give us good teachers, but they most always have some one to substitute and put right in. It is just about like choosing Commissioners. We have petitioned to have such a man as Commissioner. Our petitions met

there, but we never could get it—never could get the Commissioner that we wanted. It seemed to me that there was a kind of an interest that calculated to benefit self. The tribe must take whom they have a mind to put in. It don't seem to me that it is right, and I say that the Narragansett tribe ought to have as good teaching as any other school, and it ought to be done without political action or partiality. We ought to have a genuine school, and one that the tribe may be benefitted by. I have got eight children certainly, and I have none but what I have taken pains to get there to school even in the worst weather. Most of them have got some education. I was a property holder, and used to send to the school near where I was; and by and by they said I must send my children to this school, and now I have to send them three miles when they ought to have been there.

MR. S. H. CROSS.—You made the trouble up there at the school, didn't you, and said you wouldn't pay the tax?

MR. NOKA.—No, sir. They sent a bill to me for the teacher's board among the scholars. I said, "I have as much to eat in my house, and as good bed, and the victuals will be as good; and if you want to come to my house you can, and I am not going to pay any tax." I took the ground of a man. I had a wife that cooked good food, and if the teacher wanted to stay there he could. I had as good board as theirs, and therefore I wouldn't pay a cent. Come there and board, or go without it.

BRISTER C. MICHAEL. [A Member of the Tribe.]—As far as I am concerned, and my children, I have no desire to come out as a citizen, but to remain as I am, and to hold the lands as we do at the present time. To be a citizen I don't think would be any use to me. I shouldn't be permitted, or any of my sons, to be a juryman. Might do, as some one said a little while ago, to dig out a cesspool, or some other job.

MR. ADAMS.—They would, as citizens, be eligible.

MR. MICHAEL.—I never knew of such a case.

MR. ADAMS.—We have negroes in the Senate.

MR. MICHAEL.—That may be, but in Rhode Island there is no such thing. I never knew one on a jury.

MR. COLLINS.—I have seen a good many of them.

MR. MICHAEL.—As far as citizenship is concerned, I don't see as it is any advantage at all. The trouble seems to be with this public

land, and Fort Neck, and these places. If that was got rid of, then there would be nothing more to contend about. I say, if we are to come out citizens at all, raise the guardianship, and let us have our own property to spend among ourselves.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—That is all the bone of contention there is?

MR. MICHAEL.—Yes, sir; both among us and the white people. Fort Neck the white people want to get hold of.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—There are people that take a different view of that. They think it would improve your condition.

MR. MICHAEL.—To take Fort Neck and all the rest of this public property, and pay for surveying it, it would take the whole of it to pay for it, and we wouldn't have anything. I have seen some of the petitions, where they say the money shall be put into a fund for the poor of the State. But that wouldn't do but a very little for the benefit of the poor. And what would become of us that became paupers in the town of Charlestown? They don't want us. They say they have enough of their own, and they don't want to take us with our liability of being paupers. A good many of them to-day, if thrown out, would, perhaps, try to throw themselves on the town. Now they do keep off the town, and manage to get along with the help of the Council and neighbors.

I would say a little about our school. We have had, this past year, the miserableness of the miserable. I got one load of wood there last winter when Mr. Weaver taught school, and he was going to keep I think three months. I think his father told me. I guess he burned up one-half of it during the half term, and the rest is there now. We haven't had any school at all this year. He was appointed by the Commissioner this year, but we haven't heard anything about a school. Somebody has been there and demolished the stove and seats.

MR. ADAMS.—To whom does the house belong?

MR. MICHAEL.—To the Society.—I couldn't tell. It was bought by the Society in Massachusetts. That is deeded property.

MR. ADAMS.—How many acres?

MR. MICHAEL.—I won't say how many.

A VOICE.—Three; deeded to the Narragansett Tribe.

MR. ADAMS.—Mr. Ammons, how many pure bloods do you think there are on the reservation?

MR. AMMONS.—I don't know as there are any now.

MR. ADAMS.—All tinctured more or less?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. My mother and father were both members of the tribe, but they were not pure either of them.

MR. ADAMS.—How many do you think there are on the reservation, all told, men, women and children?

MR. AMMONS.—The last time that the Commissioners took the census there was one hundred and forty-eight (148), but there are not so many to-day.

MR. ADAMS.—How long ago was that?

A VOICE.—It was in '75.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Has there ever been any members of the tribe taken in by vote?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir. They would have to prove themselves by living witnesses. If anybody can prove themselves by living witnesses, and can trace their pedigree to the tribe, we let them in; but if they cannot do it in that way, they can stay out.

MR. ADAMS.—If born in wedlock they can prove themselves?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—Suppose they were born out of wedlock?

MR. AMMONS.—The child follows the mother. The government made a regulation, in 1792, that if they were not married the child couldn't inherit the tribal property from the father, but the woman being in the tribe the child would follow her anyhow.

MR. ADAMS.—Then we understand the Council to say that if it was not for this public land you would be willing to be a citizen?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir; I don't say so. I will tell you what I say. Congress stands as a third party. You are one party, and we are another party, and we have always been divided because your law don't allow a negro, or a mulatto, or an Indian, to intermarry into your State, and consequently it keeps you in one party, and we are in the other party. The business has got to be started in the State first. If we are not satisfied it goes to Congress. You can't bring us out as citizens. If both of the Houses vote for us to come out citizens, it would be as if we undertook to pass a vote to take away the land that belonged to you. It would not amount to anything. Congress would put us right back where we are. Congress would put you back and give us what belongs to us, and, consequently, I haven't made up my mind at all to become a citizen. There would be considerable of a turn-over to come out citi-

zens. I don't think that many of these white gentlemen here would like to have any of our nigger tribe hang around your daughters and court them. If we come out citizens, it would be a name without any gain to it. It would sound rather large, it is true, but there wouldn't be much to it; and for that reason I think it would make us much trouble for the State to give us what we should ask for. I should want to come out right on the ground with other citizens, as long as I behaved myself, and was honest and decent, and pass around the same as other citizens. But as we stand to-day, everything is all right. I meet my white citizens here and we have everything common, and everything is agreeable. There is no quarrel between us, and I should as leave keep it so as to come out free and have it amount to nothing. Your citizens are the same as we are—consist of considerable many different grades. You have low citizens and high citizens, and you have a class of citizens which we call the tops of the land, and then you have a class that are in the gutter—the same as we are. They might say, "There is a citizen in the gutter, and that is where we calculate to fetch you." I think it as well to stay where we are, as to come out for this name. I should want all the tribe to stay right here in Charlestown, and we would be a balance of power every time, and would carry the fort where we wanted to.

MR. ADAMS.—Do you think, if it was left to the reservation, that those on it would vote to be enfranchised?

MR. AMMONS.—I think they would vote against it. I don't know of but one that wants to be a citizen, and Mr. Congdon, I believe is here. I believe he wants to be a citizen, and if he wants to come out I hope you will bring him out.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from the Indian Commissioner, Mr. Cornell in regard to this matter.

MR. CHAS. CORNELL.—I don't think it is best. If they are satisfied, I think we ought to be.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from the past Indian Commissioner, Mr. Cross.

MR. SAMUEL H. CROSS.—All I can say is, that I feel just about as I have for two or three years—that the tribe would be better off if enfranchised than now. I have heard no statement made here to-day to change my opinion. I think, in the first place, that the school would be a great deal better. They talk about their condition as citizens, if made citizens. They don't know anything about what their condi-

tion would be. They would be eligible for any office, and all they would have to do is to qualify themselves and become men. There is no inducement now for them to do any such thing, and for them to say what they would be after they were made citizens is something that they can't state and don't know anything about. I think the school is as good a school as it ever has been while I have known anything about it. My first experience was that they wouldn't have any school until they made the school house as it should be. I think, as long as this burrow is here for these Indians to centre in, in the winter time, that they never will be anything. They go away and spend the summer, knowing that this is a rendezvous in the winter.

I think the talk about the fear that they will become a burden on the town of Charlestown, is futile. You see that one-quarter of all the land, that is occupied, is exempt from taxation, and the whole tribal land, including this piece at Fort Neck; and I think the tax derived from that property would provide for all the expense that the poor of the town would be to. I think it would increase the taxable property of the town of Charlestown so that the burden wouldn't be felt. I don't think they spend more than ten dollars a year taking care of their poor. If an Indian dies, it is my experience that the town has to bury him. The Indians will do nothing about it. I think they would be better off, as citizens, than to remain as they are. I have no interest in their public land, and know nothing about its value. I am talking about their condition as individuals.

MR. ADAMS.—I understand that an Indian cannot be sued. Can he?

MR. CROSS.—No, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—Can he sue?

MR. CROSS.—He has to sue through the Commissioner.

MR. ADAMS.—No other way?

MR. CROSS.—No other way.

MR. ADAMS.—I should like to hear from Mr. Cross, the Town Clerk of Charlestown.

MR. CHARLES CROSS.—I don't know as I have anything to say. My impression is that if the public land belonging to the Indians was disposed of and became taxable property, and then all the individual land was set off to the rightful owners, and became taxable, that the increase of the revenue of the town would more than balance the pauperism that would be brought into the town. Of course,

there would be some paupers, but I think the balance would be in favor of the town, and that the Indian population would be better off in one point in particular. Here is a sort of a burrow, in the centre of the town, where they congregate during the winter. Earning a little in the summer, they spend it, and then gather together in these little huts; and they have got to live from some source or other, and having none of their wages left, they raid upon the sheep and poultry pens continually. I have had one or two cases brought before me, as a Justice of the Peace, for pilfering, and I remember particularly sending one man to jail. There is a portion of them that make some pretension to farming, and have decent tenements, and carry on farming in decent shape, and those seem to be the very ones that are opposing this move. I suppose the greatest objection is that they are members of the Council, and have the handling of all the Indian funds, and are willing to carry it on for the purpose of pocketing what little income arises from the Indian lands.

MR. CARPENTER.—Have you any idea how your town feels in the matter?

MR. CROSS.—I couldn't say. I suppose there are a good many little taxpayers that are fearful that it will increase their taxation a little in maintaining town paupers, but I think the balance would be in favor of the town.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you think the majority of the town would oppose it?

MR. CROSS.—It is uncertain which way they would go.

MR. ADAMS.—Do you think they would be better off to be enfranchised?

MR. CROSS.—I do.

MR. NOKA.—May it please your Honors, in regard to the Indians occupying a position almost unanimously as if they were thieves and robbers, and their recognizing this as a burrow and a pen of unclean members anyhow,—it looks to me like a regular genuine stigma thrown upon the tribe. Now I say, and put it to your Honors, if they will take our members as they are, that if we can't shake hands with the same number in the town of Charlestown, then I miss my guess, and will sit down and be quiet. The question comes in here—are they to say that every sheep that is stolen is by an Indian? or that every degraded condition that is in the burrow is by an Indian? We say we are as temperate as they are in the white state; don't drink

any more rum than they do in the white state; and I think we have as much to eat and drink as the generality of them; and are as industrious. Now I like to see men that will come out and take a right stand, and not throw stigmas in that way. Talk as honest men, and not in that way; not because there are a few Indians hanging around in the town to recognize it as a common burrow. I am an Indian and know how to talk better than that. I say we can shake hands with them, take them number for number. We won't steal any more. I am not going to steal, and there are a good many here that have no disposition to steal. Because some one has stolen, we are all branded with it. I know that I am not in the halls of Congress, nor in the Legislature, where we can meet it, but we are on the old platform of the Narragansett tribe, where free speech and liberty is granted, and therefore let him fetch on the best guns he has, and we will see if we can't unload them for him.

MR. SAMUEL H. CROSS.—I don't say anything about it being a burrow of thieves, but I do know that members of your own Council have tried to evade an honest debt, pleading that they were members of the Council.

MR. CORNELL.—Mr. Cross seemed to be in favor of enfranchising the tribe, and I would like to ask if that is the kind of men that they want to enfranchise. We have a good many such men in the town, and we don't want any more such.

MR. AMMONS.—Mr. Cross referred to a member of the Council that didn't want to pay an honest debt. I suppose he referred to me. I put in a well at Watch Hill for Mr. Barber and Mr. Hutchison. They wanted me to put them in a good well, and had some other stone work there, and said if I would put them in a good well they would give me the other part of the job to do. So I went over there, and had to go backwards and forwards to Watch Hill on account of getting my tools sharpened, as there was no blacksmith there, and I had to hire a team; and I worked as smart as I could to finish that job, in the expectation of getting the other work to do. Well, when I got through I charged them seventy-five dollars for the job, and they said everything was satisfactory. Well, Mr. Barber said he would give me seventy dollars, and Mr. Hutchison said he wouldn't pay any such money; and says he, "we might as well be sued as not here so as to get our names started abroad." I said, "If you don't pay me I shall sue." I did sue; and I was trading two or three years with Mr. Brown up there, and on book account, and when I went to work on

that job he let me have some things, and I owed him four dollars, and told him when I got through I would settle up with him. He went to work and sued me, and the case came before Cross, the Commissioner, and I told him my home was in Charlestown. He said it didn't make any odds, the business was laid before him, and I was living then in Westerly and doing business. I asked him what business I was doing. I hadn't bought a hog of anybody, or bargained for a house or land. All the business I had done was to try to get an honest living. And I went to see Governor Lippitt. He told me to go to the Commissioner and see what he said, and I could come and see him at any time. Mr. Cross agreed that they should have sixty dollars. He took fifteen dollars out of my wages, and Brown got seven or eight dollars more, and lied about some cranberries that he let me have; and that is where they make out that some one in the Council was dishonest.

Cross, the Town Clerk speaks about stealing and burrowing. He has burrowed right on our land, and built a house, and has sold a building lot on our land to another man, and now he is telling about thieves and robbers and burrowing. If he will show a piece of land on our reservation where there is any more burrowing than it is to take our land and squat upon it, and live there on it, then let him come up and say, "Come out citizens." If you have any more guns to fire let us have them, and we won't give you anything but facts in the case.

MR. CROSS.—I would like to make a remark about what he calls "our land." I know it has been claimed by the Indians that the road that runs down to the pond is theirs. I find on the old Council records in my office where there was once a highway from the coast road down to the salt pond, a little ways from where Mr. Collins' residence now is. I find that that was exchanged for land, and that it was then made into a highway. I can show that by records ninety years old, and now they claim it as their own. Now if the town made a highway one hundred years ago I should like to know how they can claim it.

MR. AMMONS.—We made a swap with Mr. Cross, and gave him just as much land off of the east side of Fort Neck as what there was in the lane. The reason why we made the swap was that there is a very good spring where the land is now, and where the land used to go there was not any. So we made a swap with Mr. Cross—a piece off of Fort Neck of the same quantity as his east bounds; and if he will go and find where Peleg Cross' east bound was, he will find the

east side of our land, and that starts from the east side of the bridge by the saw mill, and if there was a deed, it was not recorded. Cross let Benj. Potter have it when he was on a committee, and he said he would take it home; and a few months after that I was in Kingston, and I asked him for it, and he kind of looked around and said he had lost it. If he finds on his book where the east side of Peleg Cross' land was one hundred years ago, that is the east side of his land; and he is on the east side of the brook from where Peleg Cross' land started, and it went right across his father's house, by the chimneys. This citizenship grows on to the Indian so fast that no wonder they don't want to come out citizens. Now I want your honorable body to please straighten that out, and when Mr. Cross catches any more hen thieves to straighten them out.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from Mr. Ward, the Town Treasurer of Charlestown.

MR. GEORGE H. WARD.—I don't know as I have anything to say about it except that I think the Indians would be better off to be citizens, for I think then every one would look out for himself and be a man among men. I think the town would not be burdened.

MR. ADAMS.—Would the town of Charlestown be afraid of paupers?

MR. WARD.—I don't think they would be any worse off. I think the taxes on the land would about balance that thing.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear a word from Mr. Metcalf of Charlestown in reference to this matter.

MR. FRANKLIN METCALF.—I don't know as I have anything to say about it. The Indians themselves seem satisfied with their condition, and I am not satisfied that they would be benefitted by passing into citizenship. I am satisfied as far as the town of Charlestown is concerned, that it would be a matter of expense to the town to make them citizens. I am satisfied that the increased tax would not pay the expense of the paupers that would be thrown on to the town. In conversation with quite a number of the tribe, I have learned their opinion that there would be more or less paupers all the time. They would come from other sections, and come on the town, and claim a settlement here, and we should be obliged to support them; and the taxable property that would be added to the valuation of the town couldn't in any event, as far as I can learn, be more than six or eight thousand

dollars. Six thousand from the sale of the public lands, and fifteen hundred, which is now exempt, on private lands, and it would give us about fifty dollars to support the paupers, and I think it would not begin to support them. That is a small matter, however, if the members of the tribe are to be benefitted by it. Any members of the tribe that wish to improve their condition do so now, and get lands of their own, and in most cases leave the tribe and go out of town, where they can get business to support themselves on; and to the lazy ones it makes very little difference whether they are citizens or not. I haven't seen any members of the tribe that are anxious to be citizens, and I don't know as I am very anxious to have them so.

MR. ADAMS.—We would like to have a word from Mr. Stockwell, the School Commissioner of the State, from a common school standpoint in relation to this matter.

MR. T. B. STOCKWELL.—I hardly know what you wish for an opinion on. If you wish for an opinion in regard to the school, I can give that.

MR. ADAMS.—That is what we want.

MR. STOCKWELL.—I think it was three years ago, during Mr. Tucker's administration, while I was visiting the schools of the town with him, that I visited the Indian school. We arrived at the school house about quarter past nine in the morning, and found the teacher there and one pupil. We waited until a little after ten o'clock, and before we came away three more had arrived, coming along one at a time, and on our way out we passed two more on their way. That shows, sir, to some extent the real interest which the children and the folks at home had in the school, and the light that there was in the school, and may give you some idea of what it is worth. I inquired of the teacher if that was an exceptional case, and he said, "not at all;" that they were not punctual when they did come, and didn't come regularly, and I made up my opinion that the school was practically a failure, and I have talked with those who seemed to know about it, and I am quite well convinced that the school is really a failure so far as doing those for whom the money is expended any real good. I am thoroughly convinced of this fact—that if the State, or town, or public, proposes to educate these children, they ought to be educated in the schools of the town the same as other children. I am entirely opposed to any principle which proposes to bring up a class of children apart and separate from the others; and whatever the policy that your

honorable committee may adopt in regard to the tribe, I hope that some measures may be taken to see that the children are brought up side by side among those with whom they are always to live and associate, and that they may be brought up to feel themselves as men and a part of the community. Practically, that is done to some extent now. One of the gentlemen of the Council has told you that his children attend one of the regular schools, and in all the schools of the State, outside of this town, the children, without reference to color, race, or condition, attend school alike; and in one of the towns outside of the State, the school has been managed for a number of years by a trustee whose hue is as dark as any gentleman before me now. I see no reason, as far as this school is concerned, why it should be continued. I am satisfied that the money is practically thrown away. I think they can be taken care of better than they are, and receive better training, and be better qualified for assuming the duties of citizenship, or manhood and womanhood, when they arrive at that position.

MR. ADAMS.—Mr. Thomas, do you know whether most of the boys and girls here can read and write?

MR. THOMAS.—I should think the majority could. I don't suppose any one of my age has attended this school more than I did until I was eighteen years of age. Seventeen or eighteen years ago it was taught by ———, and he was the first man that taught this school that ever carried an arithmetic in; and I went every winter. There was one or two that went in with me into arithmetic, and we never had seen an arithmetic in school. John King kept a very good school but he didn't know anything about figures. I never tried the multiplication table until then, and I went through it in two days, and through reduction in four weeks. He was deputy sheriff, I think, and part of the time he was at court in Kingston, and I got pretty near half-way through reduction. When we got to compound numbers he didn't get time to work them. He said it would never be any use to me, and told us to pass over it. I stopped somewhere about the middle of reduction. We hadn't had as much as a multiplication table in the school. The first arithmetic that ever I studied I borrowed. I used to want to ask him questions, but he said it would be no use; there was a good many questions there, and we would pass them right along. We used to have an old spelling book and a scripture book. That was all the books we had. Since that time I have raised a dozen young ones and sent them to school, and the school has always

been a failure. They generally sent us deaf, dumb, and blind men to teach us. There were some that hardly knew the way home; and Frank Tucker says he had some of the brightest scholars here that he ever had. He said he had rather have twenty-five of the scholars here than to have any twenty-five that he had ever taught. We never have had any chance. We have had everything done to keep us as ignorant as we are, and if we do know anything we have had to steal it from some one.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear a word from the Secretary of State.

MR. JOSHUA M. ADDEMAN.—Mr. Chairman, I don't know anything about this question. We have heard one side of the question, and have heard that there was a different opinion in the tribe; and I take the opportunity of asking the Committee to call upon some one that represents the tribe on the other side. Perhaps there are some here that want to be enfranchised. I have no suggestions to make.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from Mr. Congdon.

MR. SAM. CONGDON. [A Member of the Tribe]—May it please your Honors, gentlemen of the Committee, and ladies and gentlemen, and gentlemen and ladies, you will excuse me for some preliminary remarks, as my head is rather thick and my tongue rather short. I claim to be myself a black republican and an abolitionist clean to the backbone, every inch of me. I feel that every man in creation are based upon equality. I don't know that I have got very much antipathy against this race of colored people, as regards their corruptness. I don't know as they are any more corrupt than other people in States, and towns, and counties; but, gentlemen, here is a point that I wish to convey. You have got me, to-day, tied hand and foot, flat on my back. Now, get up if you can. I don't know as I shall be enabled to get through my ideas in relation to this case, as I am not a public speaker. But, gentlemen, if I have got anything, if I am ever going to have anything, I want it in my life-time; and if I have got anything, I want to know that I have got it. This calling something mine that I don't know as it is mine,—I don't think but very little of owning such kind of property.

Gentlemen, my only reason for the emancipation of these colored people, if I have any at all, is based on common sense. I ask you, gentlemen, knowing my condition probably as well as I do, if it is not common sense for me to come and ask you if I shall stay in this con-

dition. Gentlemen, I probably own as much of the tribal lands as any man in the tribe, but I don't have any use of it. I can't control it. There are a certain set of men that must be first and foremost to handle my property, and dispose of the proceeds as they see fit, and feel disposed. I don't like to have my property handled in that way. If it is to be disposed of, I feel that the State ought to let me dispose of it regardless of the future. I don't care what my future prospects may be. I say if I have a right or interest here I want it, and I want to know when I can have it, and who is going to have the benefits of it. And when I get through with it, and get ready to leave, I want to know who is going to have it. When I work for anybody, I expect at night to get my pay; but under this tribal system I may go to work and make all the improvements I can, and then it comes into somebody else's hands and my labor is thrown away, and then I am in the same condition as when I started.

Now, gentlemen, there are some privileges that we have that we wouldn't have as citizens, but, regardless of them, I want my rights, my privileges,—to act like a man and be as a man; and if I have got anything, I want to dispose of it like other men,—if your Honors recognize us as men to-day, and competent to do business,—so that I won't have to ask your Honors how and when I shall dispose of it. I have long since formed the opinion that it was better to abolish this thing, as our property is consumed in this way by these people. They get the proceeds. I have a right in the public property, and yet I have to pay for it. Gentlemen, if I know anything of my own heart and conscience, I desire to be liberated from this situation. There are exceptions, it is true. We are not under restraint like the four and a half million colored people of the South; we are not led to the whipping-post; but I had just as leave be in that condition as under this tribal institution. I have always been in favor of coming out citizens, and having the rights and privileges that other men have.

MR. ADAMS.—Do you think that the tribe, as a whole, would be better off if enfranchised?

MR. CONGDON.—Yes, sir; I do.

MR. ADAMS.—And the property be disposed of equitably?

MR. CONGDON.—Yes, sir.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Do you know of others that would agree with you?

MR. CONGDON.—No, sir; I don't. I stand on my own bottom as to that sentiment.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I didn't know but there were others that felt as you do about it.

MR. CONGDON.—I don't know but there may be, but as far as I have talked with them they want the tribe to remain. I don't wonder that the Council want the tribe to remain. And why! They are the town paupers, and consume our property, and they wish to remain here consuming our property as they have done for years. If this tribal property depreciates as it has for the last twenty-five years, somebody has got to take us in hand.

MR. CARPENTER.—What do you think the lands would bring if sold? What valuation do you put upon them?

MR. CONGDON.—Well, sir, I haven't formed an opinion in relation to that. I presume the public property would bring at the least \$2,500 or \$3,000.

A VOICE.—How much an acre would it bring—take the whole of it,—Fort Neck and all?

MR. CONGDON.—That would depend on circumstances, but my rough estimate would be, take it on the average, that it would bring more than ten dollars an acre. That is why I am in favor of the emancipation of this tribe. As our property is depreciating, it seems to me there ought to be some course pursued to make us in better condition. The condition can't be much worse than it is to-day. Here is a law passed by the State that this Council shall not have but fifty cents a day. A few years ago the town voted that they should have a dollar a day. There was a special act in '49, that the Council should have but fifty cents a day. The President, I think, has twenty per cent. over and above the rest of the Council. In '73 the town voted that the Council should have a dollar a day. We haven't had a town pauper in twenty years, and our purchases amount annually to somewhere about thirty-one dollars and a half, and I don't know as they have got a dollar in the treasury to-day, with all the interest that they have manifested towards this tribe. You can form some opinion of it from your own observation; and I hope you may adopt some future time to take a little glance over this reservation, that you may form some opinion aside from my opinion, or the opinion of the tribe, whether this thing ought to be abolished or not. There has not been pauperism here for twenty years, and to-day there is hardly a dollar in the treasury. If we should have a pauper come here from the town, they have got to wait until such a time as we can bear the burden. If

this property has got to be consumed in that way, I had just as leave the town would consume it. I think the State would give me my right, if I have any, in this property. I know where my right is, and if it is gone, I know where it is gone to. Under the present circumstances I want to be liberated from this condition.

MR. WM. D. CROSS.—I would like to inquire of the Committee whether or not, if this tribe was abolished, the poor would come upon the town of Charlestown? That is quite important. I would like to know who will support the poor.

MR. ADAMS.—Mr. Cross, of Westerly, did you consider that in the formation of your measures? Can you tell us whether that matter was settled?

MR. SAMUEL H. CROSS.—I think it leaves them for the State to take care of. That is the way I understood it.

MR. ADAMS.—My judgment is that they would gain a settlement, under the laws of the State, in whatever town they were in; and most of them being in Charlestown, they would be dependent on you.

MR. WM. D. CROSS.—As we have called upon the citizens of Charlestown to be here to-day and be heard, I think it is necessary for us to learn about this matter. It looks like going into business in the dark, and certainly, if the paupers, in consequence of abolishing this tribe, are coming upon the town of Charlestown, the question whether or not the town is in favor of it can be answered. We say, "No." I think it is very important that we should know this matter. If they come upon the town, I am opposed to abolishing this tribe. In the first place, the tribe don't want to be disbanded, and I, for one, don't want them disbanded. As it has been remarked here to-day by a gentleman from my place, all of this tribe that are disposed to do for themselves, and be men, can do so without the tribal lands being sold and the tribe disbanded. That is a very important suggestion. There are members of the tribe that have been well off, and been good citizens, and I think it is saying too much to call them burrowing thieves. I have too much regard for them. I think there are as many thieves among whites as among blacks. There have been some in Charlestown that have stolen, and a good many others that belong to the tribe have to bear the consequences. That is not right. I was born in Charlestown, and know something about them. A good many of the older portion of this tribe have worked for my father on

the farm, and I am pretty well acquainted with them, and know something about their land. Everybody in Charlestown, who knows anything about the valuation of the property, knows that it would hardly pay for selling the land. I know many of them in the town, and know that hardly any one would pay but very little for this property. They wouldn't fence it. I have heard residents of the town of Charlestown say that they wouldn't take this land if they were obliged to fence it, if you would give it to them. What a great many of these men say is true. It is a fact. You employ your surveyors to survey this land, with the inconveniences—these Indians know the inconveniences. Some have had ten acres, and they occupy twenty. Mr. Collins said that the white people, who bought ten acres, have been occupying for years twenty, and you may imagine the expense of running out this line. It was represented by friend Cross, in the General Assembly, that this Indian cedar swamp was very valuable. It is not so. He don't know anything about it.

MR. SAMUEL H. CROSS.—I never said anything about it.

MR. WM. D. CROSS.—Well, it was stated by some one that it was estimated very highly. It is not so. The tribe who go in there to cut for themselves, if they find some young cedar that is in their way they cut it down and it is wasted, and there is a scattering tree here and there; and who under heaven is going to invest money in it. It would take one hundred years at least, as I heard a gentleman say to-day, and my opinion was that it would be seventy-five years before there would be any revenue. There is no reason in it. Had that cedar swamp not been used as it has been, it might have been a good cedar swamp to-day, and it may be seventy-five years from now. Who is going to buy this land here? Nobody would give a dollar an acre for it. Perhaps they might give something for Fort Neck. In the present condition of things, and the means of the inhabitants of the town of Charlestown, it would bring but very little comparatively. Now then, these are facts; and if the majority of the town of Charlestown could speak here to-day, they would be opposed to abolishing this tribe. There are a few men here that have been irritated, who are in favor of abolishing this tribe. I don't wish to argue this question in any personal interest, but for the interest of the tribe and State. We are not to take into consideration any private interest.

I would say a few words in regard to this school question. I said that it was a failure. I know something about it, and if this school should be done away with, and these children go to the white schools

and have an equal chance, they would be more benefitted. The \$200 given to the Indian tribe is worth a very little to them, and there is a good deal of truth in what a member of the Council has said—it is put into the hands of the Commissioner. If a man wants to be an Indian Commissioner, he fishes for it; and if he has got a friend who has a little more influence, he gets it; and they employ whom they wish, regardless of the Indians. I am satisfied that, as a rule, that has been the case; and the school, as far as that is concerned, has been a failure; and the neglect of the tribe, in one sense, has made it a failure. They have neglected to send as they should. We have visited the school house to-day, and we see what has got to be done with it. I think the best thing they can do is to withdraw the \$200 and let the colored children go to the district school. That is the place for them to learn. I think, as I said before, that the town of Charlestown is opposed to this thing. They are opposed to abolishing this tribe. I don't think the State ought to force this thing upon the town of Charlestown contrary to the wish of the tribe, and contrary to the wish of the citizens.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from the present School Commissioner of this tribe.

REV. CHAS. E. WEAVER.—I didn't expect to say a word to you, and I will say but very few words. In the first place I will take it up where Mr. Cross left it. I never fished for this office, and the President will bear me witness of that. Being an old man, it was thought best by some to suggest me, and I was appointed. Speaking of the school, I ranged over this country, examined it, looked at the school house, and fixed it up by putting on a lock. But there is no need of putting on a lock; they will draw the staples. It has been said by some members of the Council here, to-day, of course referring to me, that there was no school here, to-day. Where can we have a school? The law says that they shall provide a place. Where shall the school be? Last year I didn't know who the Council was, and didn't know whom to consult. I had to inquire where the school house was, and find the school house and appoint a teacher. Some were opposed to having a school then. The majority of the scholars lie north. I found a portion of the scholars were not able to go, and I found from consulting some of the Council that they said, "give us a summer school." I ran the school three terms, and the teacher,—it is said he had consumption, and one of the Council said

this school was the miserablest of the miserable. I tried again and again to get some of the children to school, and I failed almost entirely. Another member of the Council said it was a miserable school. I employed a good teacher. He taught three terms. The register will show that the first term was commenced, I think, in June. The whole number registered was seventeen; the average attendance was eight. The second term commenced September 9th. The whole number registered was fourteen, and the average attendance seven. November 11th, the whole number, ten, and the average attendance, five.

MR. ADAMS.—What did it cost the State?

MR. WEAVER.—Say \$150. I had some fifteen dollars to purchase books. I have twenty-five dollars for my salary. Those that say it was the miserablest of the miserable are those that knew nothing about it. They would go to school one day, and wouldn't go the next. I visited the school, and gave special instructions to the teacher. He stands high, if he does happen to be my son, and I am satisfied that he did his duty. But because an Indian boy was told, "You must sit here and I will attend to you," he would take his books and go home. I did the best I knew in relation to the school. I want to commence the school,—I thought I would wait until after dog-days,—but the question is, where shall we have the school? I am conscious of what I have done, and I have done the best I knew how. This being a relic of the Narragansett tribe, and having read their history, and the history of their chiefs, I wanted to do these colored people good. I haven't changed my mind at all. If we had a place for a school that was comfortable and decent, I would set in, as soon as convenient, and give them a fall term. Some of them are three miles away. I don't know as I can give any other information. I have done the best I could do with them, and made my report. He accepted it. I never fished for it, and thought I would never have anything more to do with it. I am ready to open a school if somebody will tell me where I shall go. I am ready to put in a teacher that will teach them as well as any teacher.

MR. ROBINSON.—Are you inclined to think that they would be better off to be enfranchised, and the tribal relations abolished?

MR. WEAVER.—I don't know as I wish to answer that question, for I am not very well versed in regard to it. I acknowledge that my inclinations are for the breaking up of the whole concern.

MR. ROBINSON.—Do you think the attendance of the children would be very much better by going to the common schools?

MR. WEAVER.—Nothing strikes me more favorable. If the money is put into the hands of the Commissioner, if he is an honest man, he will be accused of doing things wrong. Ask those that have been Commissioners long before me. My opinion is, let the legislature stop appropriating any money, and throw these children into the white schools in the district where they belong. That is my opinion, and if I was a member of the legislature I would vote for that. If you don't abolish the tribe, I would put the children into the public schools and make them obey. You can't take them with the school house they furnish and do justice to them, because if you try to make them behave they will run away home, and that will be the last of them. The great question with me is, where shall I hold the school? You know what the law is, but the school house isn't located in the right place now, and isn't in proper condition. I put a lock on myself and put things there. You can't leave a book there.

MR. SAMUEL H. CROSS.—I wish it understood that I didn't charge this tribe with being a burrow of thieves. Perhaps some other person did. I think that those who wish to be better will go out and make men of themselves.

MR. T. B. STOCKWELL.—Mr. Cross alluded to a fact that was in my mind. In considering this question it seems to me that one aspect of the case has been overlooked. It has been stated that those who were disposed to do well would come out all right, and would go into the world and make men of themselves. Grant it. But what is to be done with those who don't happen to possess that inclination, who are a little sluggish, and inclined to be lazy? It seems to me one question to consider is—what is the best thing for all concerned? What is best for these very ones that, taking advantage of the present condition of affairs, instead of growing up and developing into manhood, and self-supporting, grow up shiftless and good for nothing? Isn't it a fair question to consider whether or not, for the restraint of that very class, the thing ought not to be done away with? It seems to me it is a very fair question, and one that ought to be kept in mind. It seems to me these are questions of considerable importance, and questions that ought not to be settled absolutely on the mere money question and the expenditure of money just at the present time. If, for instance, it can be made plain to your minds, that the ultimate good of all concerned will be secured by the enfranchisement of this

tribe, and the doing away with the present existing state of affairs, will not the future returns far outweigh it? Is it not a question that ought to be considered without reference to the matter of mere dollars and cents? I am able to say that I have looked at the matter, and it does seem to me that a very important question is here at issue; one that ought to be considered pretty carefully, and on broad principles, and not narrowed down to the wishes of any man, or body of men, at the present time; but the future interests of the State and tribe are to be considered in the settlement of the tribe. And, with that view especially in mind, I have made up my mind that the school should be abolished. No longer should the children be brought up with the idea that they are a class by themselves, but they should come up side by side with all the others; and in that way there will be developed in them a spirit of self-support and independence, which lies at the basis of the solution of this problem.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear a few words from Mr. Collins.

MR. JAMES C. COLLINS.—Gentlemen of the Committee, I will not detain you for more than one minute. I have some interest in this part of the State, from early connections. I have some early recollections of some of the members of this tribe. I will say here that I was born in the town of Richmond. I have one of my grandparents buried in the town of Richmond, and another in the town of Hopkinton. I am somewhat interested in this people. It has been quite a study to me while in the legislature to know what is best to do. I have talked with various members of the legislature, from time to time, from this part of the State, in regard to the very matter now under consideration. It has seemed to me that if this people would consider it advisable, without standing out as a distinct people, to come in as citizens of the State, with all the rights and privileges of any other citizen of the State—the right to serve upon a jury,—I don't agree with my friend Noka upon that point,—that it would be better for the future generations; better for themselves and their children that they should consent to abolish this distinction that now exists between them and other people. The other colored people have children and there is no distinction. They go to the same schools and churches, pay the same taxes, and have the same rights as other people. I don't suppose the Council wish to give up their office, but, at the same time, if they will look forward into the great future and see that their children shouldn't be brought up as belonging to a distinct class, but should mingle with the people surrounding them and be a

part of them, I think they would consider it better for the future. I don't understand that any member of the Council is very much opposed to this thing providing the land shall be controlled by themselves. I understand that they are unanimous on that point. My friend on the right has said that if they come upon the town of Charlestown, the town of Charlestown don't want them. They say they haven't got any paupers. They are a self-supporting people to-day. They come down here and fish, and get work upon the land and cut off wood here. I suppose the committee, if they thought it was better to abolish the tribal relations, would make some recommendations in regard to paupers. There are about twelve hundred in Charlestown, and only about one hundred and fifty people here. It is not likely that the legislature would impose upon the town of Charlestown the support of those persons who are now without the town. They are not citizens now of any town of the State of Rhode Island. They belong to this tribe, but I understand when they go to Westerly they don't give them any bread to eat, but if they die they have to bury them. I suppose those of this tribe who are now residing in Westerly, if the legislature concluded to do anything towards abolishing this tribe, would become chargeable to the town of Westerly, and those of South Kingstown and Providence would go in the same way. I take the same view as the honorable Commissioner. I do wish to enforce this upon the Committee, after informing myself as I have done to-day, visiting the school house, which is a disgrace as they say even to an Indian, that while you keep those people in that house they will always be "Lo." It is a small room, situated in a place where, if there comes a snow storm, there is no one to break out the roads that lead to it, and standing some three miles, as I understand, from some of the inhabitants of the town who are obliged to send to that school. I would insist upon this, and were I in the legislature I would advocate it, that that school should be abolished, and the children grow up side by side with the white children of the town. Furthermore, I would say to the town of Charlestown, "We will give you the \$225 that we now give towards that school, and we will make you a present of that towards educating this tribe of Indians in your schools." And I am decidedly of the opinion that you would see an improvement in the children that now attend this school, which they call so miserable. There is no encouragement—two or three miles through the woods to attend school. You will see an improvement in the rising generation. As one of the gentlemen said here, the arithmetic

wasn't carried into the school, and when he got to compound numbers he was told that it would be of no earthly benefit to him, and he had better skip along and get through the book as quick as possible. Now I say to those people, and I hope they will think the matter over for themselves, take your stand like men, and be your own masters, and say, "I am the equal and the peer of any man in Rhode Island, and I demand the same rights; and I don't want any Commissioners put over us, for we can take care of ourselves."

MR. J. W. MONEY.—In regard to the school, my opinion is, that it ought to be abolished. Several years ago I repaired that school house, and they had a very good school there. The Commissioner was very well satisfied. But at the same time my opinion is, that they ought to be brought up in the public schools as citizens, and I have expressed it before, and express it now, my private opinion is that it would be better for the State, and the tribe, and better for Charlestown to have them abolished. Here is this thousand acres of land. Somebody will own it, and improve it, and there will be a revenue come into the town. But if it is going to take all of the public lands to sell it and pay expenses, it will not pay. It would be better for the tribe to let it be. My opinion is that it is best for the State to pay the expenses, and give it to the tribe. I think it would be better in future years for them to become citizens on an equal footing with every other person in the town.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you mean, sell the property and distribute the proceeds?

MR. MONEY.—I hardly know what to do. There is a good deal to do. I think it ought to be done some way.

MR. CARPENTER.—I would like to ask the gentleman if he can give us any idea how to divide the proceeds.

MR. MONEY.—No, sir; I can't tell you. You would find a good many that wanted a part of it. There are no records to show who owns the land. That is the way it stands in my experience, and I have had considerable of it. Of course, if they become citizens, they become voters. Some would have objection to that. I think, for the future, though it may be a little expense to the town, that it would be best to have them citizens.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from Dr. Budlong.

DR. BUDLONG.—Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Committee, I came here, to-day, as a listener. I came to learn something about

this thing and not to make an address; and I shall not attempt anything of the sort. I have been somewhat surprised at the patience with which this Council has listened, and the ability with which they have defended themselves on all points. I think we must give up the idea that the race has run out. I haven't seen one take a point that he hasn't sustained, and sustained it ably. I want to simply say to them that the secret of their future success, I believe will depend on the course they take in this matter. I have listened to both sides, and tried to listen attentively, and I think that really, as Mr. Collins represented it, they are in favor of this thing if they didn't suppose the white men were trying to deceive them in some way. But I don't think there is anything of that sort attempted, or expected. The State, as far as I am capable of judging, has simply their good at heart; nothing more or less.

As far as the school is concerned—I didn't visit the house, but from what they tell me it can't be of advantage to continue it. I should say to you, by all means send your children to the district school. You want us to give you a fair chance. I say to you, if we don't, it is largely your fault. Make yourselves intelligent, honest, and respected, and no white man will refuse to recognize you, and give you positions of trust and honor; and this can best be accomplished by seeing that your children are well educated.

MR. ADAMS.—Mr. Ammons, when is your Council meeting?

MR. AMMONS.—Next Tuesday.

MR. ADAMS.—Does the Council meet often?

MR. AMMONS.—Any time when we are called.

MR. ADAMS.—How many are present that vote?

MR. AMMONS.—Well, on an average, I should think from twenty-five to thirty.

MR. ADAMS.—Come from out of town, or not?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—How many voters are there on the reservation?

MR. AMMONS.—Sometimes over forty.

MR. ADAMS.—Do the Council have pay for their services?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—How much do they have?

MR. AMMONS.—They have a dollar a day.

MR. ADAMS.—A dollar a meeting?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. We haven't met this year. Mr. Congdon speaks about swelling up expenses. The year that he spoke of they met thirty-one times. We haven't met yet.

MR. ABRAHAM CHAMPLIN. [A Member of the Tribe.]—Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, I have listened to a great deal of argument here. The question has been in my mind, what is this for? Who has called this, whether the tribe or the State; whether the tribe has called it for any special benefit that they are in need of. It is something that seems to start up all at once, as it always has as long as I can remember. Something would break out from the General Assembly to make an expense on the tribe. I would like to know whether the tribe or the State has called it for the purpose of turning out the tribe because they thought it would be beneficial to turn us out and make us citizens, or whether there is a certain class that surrounds this tribe that desire to get hold of some of the proceeds, that they have in their hands, that they may be benefitted by it. It is not the tribe that asks for this. I lived in the town until I was twenty-three years old, and am pretty well acquainted with these affairs. They propose to see what they can make out of the tribe, or see if they can overthrow the tribe and sell out a portion of this land. And what is it for? I have made out to hold the property and keep it, and now I have a guardian appointed to handle this property. This guardian, instead of seeing what would be beneficial for me, and seeing how the property should be improved so that I might get profit out of it, manages it as he thinks it ought to be managed, sets off a portion of the land, and intrudes upon privileges that I had before; and even my friends at last pinched my lot up so much that I hardly had anything left, and while I had quite a farm at the start, my guardian has took it about all away, while he was watching for my good. Now, if they are going to take me out a citizen, let me come out as I was before. Let me have what belongs to me, if they are going to turn me out. If I have got so I am capable of managing my property, lift the guardianship, and let me manage it myself. It makes quite a difference to me about the future. I want to hold on to what I have, for fear that I might fetch up somewhere and not be in a condition to take care of myself. If I have a squatting place, and my health doesn't leave me, I have some place to stay. If the outsiders would leave us alone, I think there would be no expense or trouble whatever. But we have got a little space of land that they want. I have seen a desire to drive me into the furthest mountain that they could, in order that they

might squat down on the little piece that I have. I don't wish to get into any tribe or nation that desires to rob me of my right. I would rather stand out as I am. I see citizens stand out in the ranks on the other side that are not a bit better than I am. They can go to the polls and vote, and are no better than I am. I am speaking of men in our State and town. There is a jealous spirit that don't want me to come around them. They are good friends at certain times, as good as I want. I know there is a general feeling in the town of Charlestown. They desire to get what little there is left. I shall stand up for remaining as I am. I think it would be better for the tribe.

As they spoke about abolishing the school,—I think there is a point you haven't looked at. Suppose you abolish this school, and we are not citizens. Joshua was turned out of school because he wouldn't pay his expenses. There are a good many things to be looked at when you come to this,—whether or not we have got to pay taxes to get into this school. I live in South Kingstown now, and send to school there by being taxed on a place that I hire. When I lived here I had no tax to pay to go to school. There are a good many of us now that argue to come out as citizens, that if you bring them out as citizens they will be town paupers in spite of what you may do. You see what kind of a mind he must have to argue such a thing as that. I tell you you had better look at the future. We care for the future and I say it is necessary for us to look after these things, and not say that we are going to be benefitted absolutely.

MR. HENRY CHAMPLIN. [A Member of the Tribe.]—There has been so much said that it seems to me out of order for me to speak at all, because it don't seem to me to be the real issue. It is true, you can get ideas from men here, but it may be speculative. When we come to the point right at issue, then it is necessary for men to speak. As this is simply introductory, one-half of what has been said by men here, to-day, is worth all that I can say. I am satisfied, as far as I am concerned, that it doesn't lie exactly with the General Assembly, nor with the Narragansett Tribe; it doesn't rise from that source, but it rises from certain surroundings that there are outside of the tribe, and outside of the General Assembly. The time will come when, perhaps, it may be touched, and touched effectually; but to make a long talk in regard to those facts now would be perfectly out of order.

MR. ED. S. CONE. [A Member of the Tribe.]—As a member of this tribe, I think I ought to have the privilege of speaking in regard

to taxation and the disposition of the lands. Whether the public lands are worth little or much, they belong to the reservation. But here are the private lands. We are exposed to taxation in the future, if we become citizens, and where is the revenue coming from to pay the taxes? Once in a while there will be an assessment. The result will be that there will be a flag hoisted, and it will be sold to the highest bidder to pay the taxes, until it is all used up. Then there is another idea in relation to the public lands, and that is, that if they are to be disposed of in the way that they have been recommended, they have got to be surveyed and platted, and should be paid out of the proceeds realized out of it; and then it would take all that there is.

MR. SAMUEL H. CROSS.—How do you know?

MR. CONE.—Well, I have lived long enough to know about as much about it as you do. My land is invaded by the very same ones that have been represented here to-day, and whom have I got for redress? There are many such instances that I could refer to, if I had time to bring the matter to a focus. When we talk about the place where we shall reside if we become citizens, there is no place for us. We must know that we are going to be in better condition. We don't want to do all the drudgery and have no advantages. We want to stand as men, and if we own anything we want to handle it. If we are capable of handling what we have, we are capable of disposing of it, and not have it deposited in a common fund.

Adjourned to 10 A. M., Wednesday, August 13th, at Card's Hall, Cross' Mills, in the town of Charlestown.

SECOND MEETING.

WEDNESDAY, August 13th, 1879.

The Committee met at Card's Hall, according to adjournment.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I would suggest that if there are any members of the tribe who wish to be heard in regard to the abolition of their tribal system, we had better listen to them now.

MR. CONGDON.—There are some but they don't appear to have got here yet.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The Commissioner of the Indian School stated to me, this morning, that he intended to commence the school about the first of September; that the school house was in an unsuitable condition to use, and he desired the attention of the tribal authority to be called to that fact.

MR. AMMONS.—Mr. Chairman, the Council met yesterday, and we voted to abolish our school and let the money go into the district schools where the tribe's children attended; and if they are not willing to do that, they might as well take the money to the State. Such kind of school as we had last year was no school. The school house is where nobody can look after it and see to it, and it costs us from four to twelve dollars to keep it in order from one term to another. We go and fix it, and somebody goes and stones the windows out, and break the seats, and do all the depredation they can to make an expense to us; and we can't tell who it is. Mr. Michael will probably speak on this question.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Mr. Michael, do you wish to speak on this subject?

MR. MICHAEL.—I would say this, that our school is about as bad as it can be. It hasn't been anything for the past year or two. They

haven't kept the time, and it is nothing but a bill of expense to the State, furnishing money to keep somebody else, and we don't get any benefit from it at all. I would recommend that the school be abolished entirely, and for us to have the privilege to send to the school district where it would be handier to us.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I understand then that the Indian Council had a meeting, and voted to ask that that be done.

MR. MICHAEL.—Yes, sir. We don't think that any such school as we have been having back along is any school at all. They get there from nine to ten o'clock, and sometimes two or three scholars go and don't get there until noon; and it is a perfect failure for the State to give us money to try to keep any such school as that. Last year the Commissioner of the school drew the money out before teaching the term out at all.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—If there are any other remarks, or information, to be given the Committee, in regard to the school matter, we will hear them now before we pass to other matters.

MR. CONE, a member of the tribe, living in South Kingstown, spoke against abolishing the Indian school.

MR. CARPENTER.—Mr. Ammons, if the tribal relations should be abolished, and the children of the tribe be permitted to go to the district schools, how far would the farthest child have to go to get to the district school?

MR. AMMONS.—About a mile and a half.

MR. CARPENTER. — You say the Council voted to abolish the school?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. CARPENTER.—Will you give us a certified copy of that vote?

MR. AMMONS.—I could if I was at home.

MR. CARPENTER.—You can give it to us at the proper time?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—If you will leave one with the Committee, we will be obliged to you.

MR. CONE.—You will pardon me for taking exception to a statement made here, and that is in relation to the Council having delegated to them the power of abolishing the school of the tribe.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The State only has the power to do that. It is simply an expression of the will of the Council.

MR. CONE.—Yes, sir; but at the same time the Council haven't got delegated to them the power from the town to take any such measures. The town has something to say, in relation to the school, as well as the Council. The town furnishes the pupils that attend the school. They are the ones that should be consulted. The Council has certain things delegated to them to go ahead and bring out, but when it comes to legislating matters pertaining to the town it is expedient that the town should be recognized. The Council may propose these things, but to legislate and determine I think is out of their jurisdiction. It seems to me it don't belong to the tribe to decide which way the fund shall go. If the State made these appropriations for the benefit of the tribe, it is for them to request that it be refunded back, and let the General Assembly decide what shall be done with it.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The State makes an appropriation of \$200 for the appointment of a teacher and Commissioner to sustain a school among you, and they require that the tribe shall maintain a school house in good condition. As I understand, the Council refuse to repair it; and of course you can't get the money to carry on your school.

MR. CONE.—Then let that money be refunded back.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The State will take care of that.

MR. CONE.—I express the opinion that it seems to me we have got nothing to do with appropriating our funds to the district, but that it be refunded back. When the tribe get through with it let it go back, and let them decide which way it shall go. It seems to me that the view that the school house ought to be removed to some other place is a mistake on their part. I think the school should be kept up in the central portion of the reservation where it is located. The reservation is all we have got to look at; the surroundings we have nothing to do with. When we have deeded away the surroundings, we have sacrificed so much. If people live in the suburbs, the children will grow up outside of the domain of the school. The money is appropriated for the rising generation, for the keeping up of the tribe school. The locality never will be moved, even if the school house is. Here is friend Thomas, and Ammons, and a number of others, whose land lies right in the immediate vicinity of this school house, and their children are growing up; and we don't know what may be the results in the future in regard to the progress of those children. Perhaps

they will come back to this town and State. They have got to stay on these lands if they are not able to purchase lands. We must look forward to the time when our families are coming up and taking our position; and if we are going to deprive them of that position, whereabouts will they locate next. Because my children have grown up and haven't had the benefit of that school, it doesn't argue that my brother's children may not. It looks reasonable to suppose that those children will expect to come into the school in the reservation.

MR. AMMONS.—Talk is talk, and sometimes talk has no bottom to it. That man don't want to send his children from Wakefield to our schools. He thinks he ought to have the privilege of going to school in Wakefield. Hannah Brown's children go to Carolina, when they could come seven or eight miles and come into our school. I say if my children are growing up, and I want them to know anything, I want them to go to such a school as you send your children to. Now he tells about the school house. It is easy to talk about how well it might be repaired and fixed, but how many is there outside of the town that is willing to invest money to go to work and fix the school house, and constantly have it torn down. If they will just fork the money in, I guess the Council will try to get them up the kind of a school house outside that they want; and if they haven't the money to fork, it is for the Council to act for the benefit of the tribe. We move to have this school abolished.

MR. MICHAEL.—The Council has the power to keep the school house in repair. Now, the tribe haven't got any means. These outside gentlemen won't give a cent towards fixing our school house. We have got to manage this thing ourselves, and the Council has got to manage to keep all the tribal buildings in repair. I have been in the Council about twenty-four years. With such kind of teachers as we have had, I think it is a shame to be called a school. About twenty-five years ago, when I went there, we had a teacher,—I was about eighteen or twenty years old, and liked to hunt pretty well,—and I and the teacher would sit there and talk about fox hunting and rabbit hunting all day long. He stayed there his hours, and drew the money from the town of Charlestown, when his time was out. Well, they stood up and read once or twice, and then sat up by the fire and talked about fox hunting. It is a shame, and ought to be abolished.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Of course this action of the Council don't abolish the school or change the money.

MR. CONE.—But it casts a reflection on the town. I stand up impartially before my townsmen. I have been called at sundry times to devise ways and means by which they should conduct their affairs. Then, when I lived in Providence, whenever there was a petition drawn up by the Commissioners, or others, for the abolishing of the tribal rights, etc., I was one of the first to act, and thought I should inform all the members, even in the city of Providence, of this fact, and require that they should go forward and help to direct or devise ways and means by which we should sustain our tribal rights. That they are all conversant with.

Furthermore, in relation to what my friend, last on the floor, or the one before him, said respecting Hannah Brown, with all due respect to her. She has raised up a large family of children, and I think that they are so far advanced that they have got through with schooling. She is older than I am, and my youngest child is in her twentieth year. But her children are members of this Indian tribe, and are liable in the future to come back to this tribe; and if they send their children at all, it would be in the reservation nearest to where they are located, and that will be the place where the school is now located. I know pretty much of the lands and the surroundings, and many of those here are as conversant with it as I am. It seems to me there has not been, from the time I was twenty-one, but a very few Council meetings—I mean special calls or town meetings,—but what I have been summoned and present, and I have used my influence as I have. I never received a single cent or asked it, but felt an interest with the tribe and worked with them for the best good of the whole; and to-day I stand as a vindicator, in the same light as I did then; and, notwithstanding my friend Ammons has been around Cape Horn and understands those things better than I do, yet I was *here*, while he was around Cape Horn, looking after the matters here, and I understand these things better than he does.

MR. NOKA.—I am a member of the Council, but my business was such that it was not convenient for me to attend the meeting yesterday. But I was certainly in hopes that the members of the tribe generally would be in full agreement in regard to the best good that may be devised here, as I think the tribe ought to be perfectly in unison in regard to the best good, and what would look like the best good. Mr. Cone has given a few remarks here. He is living out of town and has for years; and his children haven't been here so as to attend that school for years. The tribe used to be about half-and-half, one part on

the west side of the swamp, and the other on the east side of the swamp. Where my father and mother lived, and where I was raised from infancy, was on the west side of the swamp. Then our people used to go and attend that school. Now there are very few families on the west side of the swamp. Now there is nobody there to protect that school house. There has been a good deal of money laid out. When Mr. Money was the Commissioner, he labored for the benefit of the tribe, and got an appropriation, and fixed the school house up in very good condition. Now there is a set of beings from some quarter that constantly molest us, and there isn't a single year but what our windows are broken down, and the seats broken up. Sometimes we have new sashes to put in. There is nobody to look out for that school house, and there is no doubt but that the school house is in bad condition. The legislature may delegate somebody to keep the school house up, but it is impossible for the school house to be kept in any order by the Council, or, I think, by anybody else. Furthermore, we have considered, in the years that have gone past, that it was too far off, and the Council made a proposition a few years ago to get us a school house in a more convenient place. They haven't been able yet to perform that part, and therefore it has stood. My children living upon the road that comes to the mill here from Carolina, generally, when they have commenced to go to school, I don't suppose there are any that would be on the registry that ever attended more promptly than my children, when they were under my control. Since they have been of age they have been to school. We have urged them, and sent them when the snow was very high to keep them to school, and the record will show it.

MR. CARPENTER.—You know there are other questions that we have got to consider, of as much importance as this. I suppose you will allow me to ask you a few questions. In your judgment, not taking into consideration the dissolving of the tribal relations, do you think the school ought to be done away with?

MR. NOKA.—Where it now stands I think it can't be any advantage to the tribe.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you think the tribe would be benefitted by sending to the district schools?

MR. NOKA.—Yes, sir.

MR. CARPENTER.—In your judgment it is impossible, under the present circumstances, to keep that school house in repair?

MR. NOKA.—Yes, sir; I think so.

MR. CARPENTER.—Now, will the Indian Commissioner just step this way a minute. You are acquainted with the lay of the land up there?

MR. CORNELL.—Not very well.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you think the tribe would be better off by doing away with that school?

MR. CORNELL.—I think they would.

MR. CARPENTER.—And you think that the tribe have difficulty in keeping that school house in repair?

MR. CORNELL.—I think they have. The school house being where it is, there is nobody to see to it.

MR. CARPENTER.—That is not taking into consideration whether the tribe is dissolved or not.

MR. CORNELL.—I understand.

MR. CARPENTER.—What do you think would be the feeling of the people of Charlestown in regard to distributing these children throughout the district schools?

MR. CORNELL.—I don't know. Some would object, of course. Probably the general feeling would be opposed to it. I should think perhaps that would be the feeling. Still, I don't object. I would send my boy to school where they went just as soon as anywhere.

MR. CARPENTER.—Mr. Cross, do you think, not taking into consideration the question of dissolving the tribal relations, that if the school was done away with up there, it would be necessary to build a new school house for them?

MR. CHAS. CROSS.—At whose expense?

MR. CARPENTER.—Well, I ask this question merely in regard to territory.

MR. CROSS.—I think, as has been suggested, that it would be a pretty good move if the State would pass over to the town the appropriation that they already make for the Indian school, and let the tribe children go to the white schools. I think the children of the tribe would be benefitted, and I don't know as anybody would be discommoded in consequence of it.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you think it would be necessary to build a new school house, or could they be accommodated in the district schools?

MR. CROSS.—I think they can be. I think the distance isn't too great.

MR. CARPENTER.—What would the feeling probably be?

MR. CROSS.—That I can't answer. There would probably be a diversity of opinion.

MR. CARPENTER.—You think the children of the tribe would be much better off.

MR. CROSS.—I do, certainly. I have had some experience in that school. I was Commissioner of that Indian school for three or four years, and my business was to establish a school there two terms a year, summer and winter. I used to hire teachers and would visit the school occasionally, and I found they didn't attend the school. You hardly ever would get over one-half the attendance of the number registered. With fifty registered, if you got an attendance of twenty-five you would do well. I have seen, by the registers kept, that there would be some of the children that would enter the school, and in a term of three or four months there wouldn't be more than three or four days attendance. Mr. Noka's children attended pretty regularly, and they got a pretty good education. That seems to be the trouble in running this school—to get the children to attend.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I noticed that at the first meeting of the Committee the statement was that the average attendance for the last year was about seven. How many children do you think there was?

MR. CROSS.—I don't know. I haven't had anything to do with it within the last year. My son taught that school one term, and perhaps can tell you.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Mr. Geo. C. Cross.

MR. CARPENTER.—You taught this school up here?

MR. GEO. C. CROSS.—I taught it one term.

MR. CARPENTER.—About how many did you have?

MR. CROSS.—I think I registered twenty-one.

MR. CARPENTER.—What was the average attendance?

MR. CROSS.—It was between eleven and twelve.

MR. CARPENTER.—What degree of proficiency was manifested there?

MR. CROSS.—There was a few of the scholars that attended very

regularly, Mr. Noka's children especially,—and they were the furthest advanced of any among the number. I think one or two of these came one day; others were two days and some, three.

MR. CARPENTER.—Did you teach arithmetic then?

MR. CROSS.—I did.

MR. CARPENTER.—How far in the book did you go with any of the scholars?

MR. CROSS.—I think I went to compound numbers. Some of them got through the multiplication table.

MR. CARPENTER.—Do you think the tribe would be benefitted by doing away with that school and putting them in the district schools?

MR. CROSS.—I don't know as they would be any more benefitted if they would attend that school. The main point would be to get them to attend. As they attend now I don't think they get the benefit of the money appropriated for that school.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Mr. Lewis, will you tell the Committee what you think about the feeling in regard to distributing these people throughout the town.

MR. NATHANIEL LEWIS.—As far as I know myself,—I have been living in our district twenty-five years, and, perhaps, am as well acquainted as any one living in the district,—I think there are some ten colored families living in our district, and, if you abolish this school, of course those people will come into our school, No. 5. Our school at the present time, *i. e.*, last winter, was all filled up. I think four years ago this season we built an addition on our school house, and our seats at the present time are all filled. You abolish that school and put those ten families in our school, and, as we are full now, we would have to build on.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—It probably would affect your district more than any other one in the town?

MR. LEWIS.—Yes, sir. I think it is nearer for Mrs. Stanton's children than what it would be here, although our district don't quite touch her property.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Mr. Wm. D. Cross, will you tell the Committee what you think about the feeling of the town in regard to taking the children into the district schools.

MR. WM. D. CROSS.—I don't know. The question hasn't been before the town recently, and I haven't heard much said about it. I

presume, as Lewis says, that perhaps their district would be pretty well filled; but I suppose, if I am allowed to make the remark, that that is not the question exactly. The question, if I understand it, is: Is it for the benefit of the tribe if that school be abolished. It is very evident to me that that is the fact. Mr. Cross, who taught the school, thinks they would learn if they attended that school. I think not. Sometimes they get good teachers, but you see it is very difficult to hire a first-class teacher to come down there and teach school, as it is very difficult to get there, etc.; and it is very evident to me that the school ought to be abolished. As a colored friend says, it is very difficult to sustain a school house there in decency; and Mr. Ammons suggested that scholars would learn by hearing others go through with their lessons. That is all correct. If they attended the higher grade of schools, the association of the colored children with the whites would tell in a few years. I was Indian School Commissioner two seasons, I think, and I saw that it was difficult for any teacher to control that school as we wanted it, because many of the teachers had been deficient in their ability to teach the school, and they were allowed to lounge around. If they were among white children, and stood as they say upon the floor to recite, I think it would be an improvement. I presume that Lewis would be opposed to abolishing this school, but if we set aside all personal interest and work for the good of these Indian children, we will see that it is the best thing. The education of the children is the salvation of this tribe. Put these children into a good school and let them have equal advantages with the whites.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—There is one question that seems to be more pressing than others, and that is—what shall be done between now and the meeting of the General Assembly about the school? The Committee have no power over it, and the Council decline to repair the school house, and recommend the discontinuance of the school.

MR. CROSS.—I don't see as there can be any school under the circumstances.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—There has been a request in writing by the members of the Indian Council to be heard in regard to some recent encroachments on their territory. The Committee will listen for a few minutes in regard to that. We will hear Mr. Ammons first.

MR. AMMONS.—I can tell you about that land. There was once a pretty good clump of cedar on there that Caleb Kenyon claimed from

a deed made by the administrators of Browning Green's land. So we had two surveys. We informed them, but they wouldn't come on to that survey, and the court appointed a survey by Mr. Noyes of Kingston. They didn't come there.

MR. CARPENTER.—Has this been before the courts?

MR. AMMONS.—Part of it has been before the courts.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—We don't wish to hear about anything that has been before the courts. Mr. Thomas, we will hear you.

MR. THOMAS.—The suggestion I have is simply this, that such property as no man has got any deed of, and hasn't bought it of anybody, we claim that; for instance, this property which we call the Welshian property, that there is no deed of. All this property that a man hasn't any deed of we claim as our tribal property. That is about the force I have of this. We know where the Welshian corner is. There are forty acres deeded, and I never have found a man that had put a compass there that didn't give Kenyon all the land we had. They always work for their own interest. Mr. Cross can find the copies of these deeds, and can put a compass on. A man that went there once said, "I am thunderstruck. Here is the stump, and I can't go any further." He wouldn't stand to the test. He didn't want to give us what belonged to us. Use me like a man if I am one. If I have any right here, I want what belongs to me. If a man has got any papers to cover these grounds, let them be produced; but let them be covered by papers or some contract. I am not to blame for being black or blue, but I want my honorable right. If you are going to make white men of us, let us be so. We don't claim anything but what is square. We want you to have all that belongs to you, and we want the rest. If there is any remnant left, let us have it. We commence at ——— pond, at the old chesnut tree, and run to big rock and to the Welshian ———. There was only three purchases of that great territory. Mr. Cone didn't tell how he was aggrieved there—how Kenyon took a stick up and banged his father over the head, and drove them all out of the gate. He doesn't say anything about that, but he is worried about the school house.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—These matters have been before the courts?

MR. THOMAS.—Yes, sir; but they hold on to the same claims. I will produce you the vouchers for everything we set up. We found the deeds, and surveyor, and everything. We have a judgment of the court. Kennedy said, as long as he—————, he should

keep on with that claim; and Stanton said he would stay by Kennedy. The charges have been made by somebody that we claim that people are gobbling up our things. We claim that everybody that meets us wants to grab wool and hair. Nobody likes you so well but he wants a little money out of you. We are always beat and expect to be. I have looked on and seen them fix out the judgment of the court before there was a witness called. It was a good boiled dinner. Seven dollars and costs Benjamin.

MR. WM. D. CROSS.—I would like to make another suggestion in regard to abolishing this Indian school. You may be aware that the property held by the Indians is exempt from taxation for the support of the public schools and pauperism in the town. Now, if the school is to be abolished and the tribal children go into the white schools, I think the Indian land ought to be taxed to support that school, to be passed over to the town of Charlestown to defray the expense of the extra scholars that come in.

MR. CONE.—There was a matter that Thomas spoke of, in regard to the disputed land that I am very conversant with, but it seemed to me that while I was talking on the other topic it didn't belong to it.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—This question has been carried before the courts of the State?

MR. CONE.—No, sir; it never has been. It was in '27, and has been up to the present time; and it is a matter that was out of the reach of my father, in consequence of the course that was pursued with him in relation to it. My brothers and sisters are involved in the same thing, with the tribal land. The tribal land is involved in the same thing, and it is a proper time that it should be laid before you, that you may make a report of the same if you feel so disposed.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I have a suggestion to make, *i. e.* that the disputed matters you reduce to writing if you desire to call the attention of the Committee and Assembly to them; and present it to the Committee just as you wish; and I presume the Committee will call the attention of the General Assembly to it.

MR. CONE.—Yes, sir. I can give the details better than I could write it out.

MR. CARPENTER.—I don't think we care to go into that unless we are instructed to investigate that.

MR. CONE.—According to the paper you were sent for that specific purpose.

MR. ADAMS.—I don't think we care to go into these disputed points just at present. Perhaps, after consideration, at another meeting, that matter may be taken up. If it is thought best to make a perfect survey of the lands, then we would hear you about the question in dispute. I would like to ask Mr. Ammons a few questions. Do all the members of the Indian Council live on the reservation?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—Any of them?

MR. AMMONS.—There isn't but three that live on the reservation.

MR. ADAMS.—Who are they?

MR. AMMONS.—Joshua Noka, Brister C. Michael, and myself.

MR. ADAMS.—Where does Thomas live?

MR. AMMONS.—At Richmond.

MR. ADAMS.—And Mr. Sekater?

MR. AMMONS.—Mr. Sekater lives over here on the edge.

MR. ADAMS.—What would you estimate the valuation of the public lands to be?

MR. AMMONS.—In this part of the reservation?

MR. ADAMS.—All the public lands you have got. If you don't care to answer, you need not. About how many acres should you think there were, as near as you can guess?

MR. AMMONS.—I should think in our public lands taking them all together, there is somewhere betwixt fourteen and fifteen hundred acres.

MR. ADAMS.—That includes the cedar swamp?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir; the shore reservation, and what there is in the towns.

MR. CARPENTER.—You don't mean to take into consideration the contested property?

MR. AMMONS.—Never has been disputed—not the shore claim. Our public property here has never been disputed.

MR. ADAMS.—Where do the members live that don't live on the reservation?

MR. AMMONS.—Mr. Sekater lives over a little ways from where the line runs. It runs up by P——t pond.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—It is in the town of Charlestown?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. Thomas lives in Richmond.

MR. ADAMS.—How many of the Council own cottages?

MR. AMMONS.—They all own cottages except Benjamin. He hires a tenement.

MR. ADAMS.—What should you think the population was on the reservation, of your people?

MR. AMMONS.—What there is to-day—there are a good many children that have gone off, and come home when they are a mind to, but I don't think it has depreciated much from 138 when they are at home.

MR. ADAMS.—How many voters are there generally at your annual meeting in March?

MR. AMMONS.—As many as fifty. Last year I think there was pretty near forty. It ran pretty close last year.

MR. ADAMS.—Pretty pure?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. There isn't any cheating about it. We get them all in line so they can be counted.

MR. ADAMS.—When they used to vote with a piece of chalk they would have two or three creases?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. They could put on two or three chalk marks, and carry the elections the same as the white folks do.

MR. ADAMS.—Are members ever voted into your tribe by a vote of the Council?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir; all the way we can make members is when anybody comes and claims to be a member of the tribe they inform the Council, and the Council is bound to attend to them at any time when they call. Then they must present living witnesses. We can't take paper. We want a witness that can go back and trace their pedigree from the stump; and when they can trace from the stump, and bring clear evidence, then we will receive them as members of the tribe; and if they can't do that they pass on.

MR. ADAMS.—You simply want the pedigree?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir; and we want it straight.

MR. ADAMS.—But you don't vote in anybody for the sake of having more members?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—What do you charge for the privilege of going into the cedar swamp and cutting wood for the winter?

MR. AMMONS.—Sometimes it depends on circumstances. When the white people fight us kind of hard, and we think we have got to go to the Assembly to meet them, then sometimes we charge as much as three dollars; but if we think we are going to have a kind of an easy path through, and haven't got any paupers we put it down to half a dollar.

MR. ADAMS.—What do you do with the money? Is that the source of the money for the paupers?

MR. AMMONS.—What it don't take to pay the Council for their services we generally lay out on the meeting house and school house.

MR. ADAMS.—Anybody goes in that wants to—a dozen or half a dozen in the winter?

MR. AMMONS.—We let in all we can—what belongs to the tribe. We let in all the teamers we can now. We charge them for a permit hauling out, and we do the best we can to raise a revenue.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—You don't let in white people to cut?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—Your income meets your expenses now does it?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Sam. Cross, at the last meeting, spoke about one of your tribe that died in the town of Westerly, and they were at some expense about the funeral. Did you pay that?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir. It didn't come in the right way to the Council. Generally, the funeral expenses and the last sickness that we pay is when members come in to the Council while they are living. But if anybody dies that belongs to the tribe, whether in Westerly or California, we don't hold ourselves responsible to bury them. If any are sick or poor, and are fetched to us, we look out for them, and when they die we try to bury them in a proper manner. But if they die out of the town, where they have spent all they had and their life and substance, we don't go after them.

MR. ADAMS.—You are very much like white people?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir.

MR. ADAMS.—You have settled about the school question, have you?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. We offer to you a resolution. We think we had better abolish our school. I think the State had better do

what it has a mind to with the money, but we would like to have the privilege of letting our children go to the district schools.

MR. ADAMS.—Yes; they ought to go with the white boys, the same as anybody else.

Adjourned, to meet at the call of the chair.

THIRD MEETING.

The Committee met at the Indian Meeting House, on Friday, October 31st.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Well, gentlemen, this seems to be the day appointed for the third meeting of the Committee in conjunction with members of the tribe. We have had two extremely pleasant meetings and undoubtedly profitable. Facts have been drawn out which were interesting to me, and which led me to investigate the history of the tribe, and I feel that I am quite familiar with their history.

To-day we would like to hear from the Council in reference to what they desire in connection with this matter, and what plans they have in their minds; how they would like to proceed, if they would like to proceed at all, and what they would do with the public lands. The question of paupers is virtually settled in my mind, and that need not be discussed here. The school is out of the question, and the only question left, it seems to me, is the question of public lands. I would like to hear from the President of the Council, in reference to any plan that he may have in his mind.

GIDEON L. AMMONS. [President of the Indian Council].—Gentlemen, in my mind the opinion is that we want to sell to you the shore lands, but we don't want to throw away our meat and not get anything for it. As far as I am concerned, if the State is willing to pay us for our vacant lands and the shore claims, and enough for the

expense of the Council and members of the tribe that they pay out, to divide among the individuals, then let them make us citizens and raise the guardianship. But until we have what is actually ours, I don't see that it is any use for us to come out citizens for nothing, just for the sake of giving the State what belongs to us. That is my opinion.

And again, the general government guarantees that all private property that is taken for public use shall be paid for, and consequently, what property we have got is private property. If the State want to sell our property we want the money for it, and we want the money among ourselves. I will take my part, and if the others become paupers, or lose it in any way, then you will have to manage them as you see fit. But I don't want it the same as some tribes have—to have an overseer appointed to use it all up, and we have no use of it. I think it is common sense that almost everybody wants what he has got, and it is not more for us to have what belongs to us than it is for anybody else. The shore claim hasn't been used by this tribe for a great many years. I know the tribe used to go on a fishing trip, and stay as long as they had money to buy rum with. They didn't fish much, but lounged around; said they didn't want to fish, for there was fishing enough up here. I think it is some sixty years since we used to turn out.

THE CHAIRMAN.—How much is there above high-water mark?

MR. AMMONS.—Five rods. When the farmers used to build a water fence on their line, they said they were willing to give it up when there was any call for it; and when there was a wall built on the shore, it was built back five rods from high-water mark. They talk about the expense that we are to the State. All the expense that has been brought by this tribe has been brought through the Commissioner. They have always talked about bringing us out citizens and selling our public lands. That would make expense for us, and, of course, I don't think it would be right for us to give the State our public lands. I think they ought to pay us for them. But if they don't want to, but want to raise the guardianship, we want them to set off what belongs to us; and we would like to sell it ourselves, when we have a right to do so. But if the State wants it, then let them just fork over the good reliable greenbacks, and I stand ready to sign the deed any time. And I should really like to know what your opinion is—whether you think it is reasonable or not.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I want to say, for one, that the situation is

something like this in my mind: This question has been agitated more or less during the past, and I think the time has now come when a change ought to be made in the relation between the State and the tribe. There are some questions that are practically settled, such as the separate school system. The public opinion of the State agrees with the action of the tribe in discontinuing that school, and there is no doubt that there will be a provision made for the Indian children to attend the other schools of the town. Then there is the question of the land. Of course it will carry the citizenship with it when this change is made. And in regard to the paupers, I think that the prevailing opinion is that the State should take care of those that might become paupers, so that the town of Charlestown will have no more paupers than the other towns of the State. Those questions being practically settled, the only remaining question is, what is the most equitable way of disposing of the tribal lands; and that is a question in regard to which I would like to know the opinion of the Council and members of the tribe.—What would be a fair and equitable way of disposing of the land?

MR. AMMONS.—Well, of course they have got coal yards and ship yards, etc., on the shore, and I suppose they would be willing to buy the land and pay for it; but I suppose the most reasonable way would be for the members of the legislature to see those persons. We have a trespass law, but I don't suppose it would be of much use to use it in this State; and consequently we are willing to take a just compensation for the land.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The tribe cannot commence a civil suit without the consent of the Commissioner?

MR. AMMONS.—Individuals can. The Commissioner has nothing to do with individual cases, but tribal cases are to be brought in the name of the Commissioner.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Then the question resolves itself into this—What do you think would be a fair price for the public lands, and where ought the proceeds to go, and how ought it to be divided?

MR. AMMONS.—I suppose we would sell the land that belongs to this tribe in Cookstown and what there is here, ponds and all, for what you can make out of it.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Practically they are of no use to you?

MR. AMMONS.—They are useful to us in fishing. I should think,

as things stand now, taking the ponds and everything, about five dollars an acre, including the whole.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—All the public lands?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir. Wauchaug pond, I think, contains 1500 acres. We have three kinds of land, upland, swamp land and pond land; and why this was reserved was on account of the ponds. It was of more benefit to the Indians. They looked at the ponds with a greater magnitude than they did at the lands, and they didn't care much about lands, and haven't managed them very expensive.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—How much other land is there?

MR. AMMONS.—Well, I should suppose in our public lands there might be somewhere in the neighborhood of fourteen or fifteen hundred acres, all told. I have forgotten exactly how many. There is six hundred acres in Wauchaug, and then there is School House pond.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Do you exercise any jurisdiction over the Wauchaug pond?

MR. AMMONS.—Yes, sir; over all of our ponds.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—You think you own it?

MR. AMMONS.—Of course we do.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Here is a property that you estimate is valued at about \$15,500. Now what revenue do you get from it from all sources?

MR. AMMONS.—We get enough so that we make out to live. If we lease it to the white people it is about thirty-five or forty dollars, and the rest we use in common. Perhaps we get out three or four hundred dollars worth of stock in the winter, but it only puts a few dollars into the treasury. But the tribe is benefited by what it gets out of it. But we can't send the white people in to cut, because that law is fixed. A member of the tribe told me that since the last meeting of the Committee he had given considerable attention to looking over the land and ascertaining the value of the wood, and he said that it really was of no particular value, so far as cutting the wood and carrying it to market; that actually it was valueless. The wood is down to such a low ebb that if a man undertakes to chop he can't hardly make his bread by chopping. When Dr. Griffin figured it out he said there was about seven hundred acres in the cedar swamp.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—How much in Fort Neck?

MR. AMMONS.—About nineteen and three-quarters.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—At a former meeting of the Committee the estimated value of the vacant lands was \$3,500. I think that was the highest estimate, and some of your own people went below \$2,500 I believe.

MR. AMMONS.—That was simply the vacant lands without the ponds.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I have no doubt myself but that the State would be willing to deal generously with the tribe, but I don't think that any one would listen to such a price as that.

MR. AMMONS.—We had better keep it. If we come out citizens we couldn't get it from you for any such money as that.

MR. ADAMS.—Suppose the State should say to the tribe, "We will remove the guardianship over you; take your lands and do what we like with them, and hereafter they shall be subject to taxation the same as other lands in the State, and you shall be subject to the same rights and privileges, and under the same law that any other citizen takes." Would that be satisfactory to you?

MR. AMMONS.—If they removed the guardianship we would stand the same as any other white man.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—In the sale of this vacant land which has taken place, there was some sold some years to pay the debts of your chief. In the sale of that land who gave the deed?

MR. AMMONS.—We had a treasurer, and the treasurer was invested with power from the General Assembly to keep money in the treasury all the time. Joe Stanton was the last treasurer they had, and he wanted to keep it pretty full of money; and finally the legislature dismissed him, and prohibited the sale of land until '43. In '43 they gave them a grant anew to sell, and appointed a Commissioner in the place of the treasurer. But before that, if the tribe wanted any money, all they had to do was to call on the treasurer, and he sold what land he thought was worth anything. I don't know who gave the deed. I never have looked over the record to see how the deed was drawn, but it had to go through the legislature.

MR. THOMAS.—The Council signed these deeds.

MR. ADAMS.—Was this estimate of the lands made by the Council or is it your individual opinion?

MR. AMMONS.—It is my estimate, and I never asked them what they estimated it at. They are at liberty to speak for themselves.

MR. ADAMS.—Are there any claims against the tribe outstanding?

MR. AMMONS.—I think none except individual claims.

MR. ADAMS.—When you stated before that it was about 1500 acres, did you intend to include the water as well as the land?

MR. AMMONS.—No, sir. Simply the land.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I would like to hear from Mr. Noka his opinion about the matter.

MR. NOKA.—Gentlemen of the Committee, if I could make out in my own mind substantially that the tribe would be benefited by it, I would go for it; but the question is how to dispose of the reservation. And then there would be some that would probably get rid of it very soon, and would have nothing left. Here they get a living right along steady, and I don't think it would be an endorsement of mine to sell the property for nothing, because I am well aware that if this was owned by the State, or by the citizens of the State, that we couldn't come in and buy this land for what they would offer us for it. There needn't be any improvements made, and we couldn't get it back for the same price that they are asking us to sell it for. Now why isn't it worth as much to us as to anybody else? If it is worth a great deal more to somebody else, certain privileges that they will receive benefits from after it has gone out of our hands, then they ought to pay for it. If they should find a mill privilege anywhere, they say it is not worth anything to us, but it is worth something to them. Then if it is worth something to them they ought to pay for the privilege. And so it is in regard to this property here. We are aware that here is a lot of property that is paying no taxes. As soon as it begins to be taxed, after they have got it, the valuation would begin to rise, and there would be an improvement, and probably there would be orders whereby people could pass through it that have no right at the present time. If it is worth something to the State, it is worth something to us, and I say it ought to be paid for. If the land is so situated that it can be improved and made more valuable, then if we sell it we ought to have some of the valuation. •

In regard to this shore claim, I am not very familiar with it, and I would like to hear from the Committee in regard to that, whether they would advocate those claims before that body, and, if it is a valid claim, how they would advocate the shore claims. Now if they hold those lands without a legal right, we would like to know whether this Committee would see that we gained the right to that land, or whether

they would be willing to pay a percentage and hold the land, or pay for the lands and own them. It seems to me that there is something involved upon this Committee to see in regard to that. I don't know of any land that has been sold that has gone to the water's edge; and they can hold what their deed covers, and no more. The building that we are in stands on the public lands. We don't want to sell our church, and we don't want to sell everything that we have got. If I could make up my mind I would be willing to do something, but I don't think the price was exorbitant when the president called it five dollars an acre. When there is a piece of Indian land to be sold it is worth only about so much. Just as quick as they get it you try to buy it back, and see what you can get it for. It is worth something just as it is out of the Indians' hands. I never should consent to sell this land unless every individual could have the money all in his own fist, to use as he thought proper. I can't see it any other way.

MR. ADAMS.—How much do the Council receive for the privilege of the swamp?

MR. NOKA.—Sometimes fifty or sixty dollars a year. If it happens to be a good winter there may be some forty that go in.

MR. ADAMS.—How much do you think it would average per year for the last ten years?

MR. NOKA.—It may average thirty dollars; sometimes higher and sometimes lower.

MR. ADAMS.—Then how much have you received a year from the public lands?

MR. NOKA.—I should think some seventy dollars. Sometimes I think it goes a little above that, and sometimes a little below.

MR. ADAMS.—What is done with that money?

MR. NOKA.—Sometimes the Council have their pay when they meet; sometimes we make repairs; sometimes to benefit those that are in need; and just as occasion requires. All the money is spent for the benefit of the tribe, including the expenses of the Council.

MR. ADAMS.—What has been the expenses of the Council a year for the last ten years?

MR. NOKA.—Somewhere in the neighborhood of eighteen dollars a year. If the Council have to go to the legislature, and stay a day or two in Providence, of course the expense is greater.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—Do you think your lands are improving or depreciating in value?

MR. NOKA.—I think, to speak truthfully, that they are rather depreciating. There is not probably so much wood on them as there used to be. I think that Fort Neck, in the way that it has been managed for the past few years, is becoming better. It rents for eighteen dollars a year. Next year I think it will rent for twenty dollars.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—The Council have sold considerable land within the last ten years?

MR. NOKA.—Not the public lands. Only what we call private lands.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—What have they realized an acre for that private land?

MR. NOKA.—The individuals have sold it. I have not derived anything from it, because I haven't sold any. I couldn't give you an estimate of what they received. There is one thing that I don't want the Committee to slip over. I would like to have your Honors say something about the shore claim, as it has been investigated by the President of the Council.

MR. CARPENTER.—What do you think it would cost this tribe to substantiate their claim to the property?

MR. NOKA.—We don't want it to cost us anything. We want you to look after it.

MR. CARMICHAEL.—I would like to hear Mr. Thomas give his opinion, in case the State decides to dissolve the tribal authority, what would be the most equitable way of disposing of the land.

MR. THOMAS.—Your Honors, I have thought this thing over for myself, and I look at it like this:—That the State has nothing to do with disposing of our property at all. We will admit that we are under guardianship and protection of the State of Rhode Island, but I don't think the guardian has any right to sell our land and make us expense. If the State see fit to raise the guardianship, then we stand as we were before. I don't think it would be any new thing for them to do it, and then what belongs to me I have a right to ask for. I don't want the State to take it into their head that they want to sell this property, and disenfranchise me from the property that belongs to me, and that I inherited. Give me my right. If they choose to raise the guardianship, let them raise it. I will be thankful if they do, or I

will be thankful with it as it is. But when they raise it I stand as other men; everything that belongs to me then is mine; and if it is not but ten cents, I would like to have it. Our property, like all other property, has depreciated. But our property is undervalued when you take it in the bulk; it is wholesaling the property when you make an estimate of it. But in retailing it, then we have to pay for it. We can buy one hundred acres a great deal better than we can buy two acres and a half. Our land won't sell for anything. I don't think it would bring a dollar an acre. The wood is a little better, but I don't suppose that if you gross it our whole township would bring \$1.50 an acre. There is not much sold of the wood. Our only market is the railroad and the villages above. No market on the shore. What is going to be the result if you bring this thing out—for better or for worse? You can't tell. But I think, if the State chooses to do so, let them raise the guardianship and let us be, and if we can't take care of ourselves, let them take care of us. If we can get along I don't know but they might as well leave us alone now as any time. I understand that the State intended to educate us, but the way we have been educated hasn't amounted to anything; and about everything that the State has done for us has been a failure. I think if the State cares for the interest and prosperity of the tribe, that the best thing for the State to do would be to raise the guardianship and let us attend to our own business. The expense don't amount to much, and we are citizens just as soon as the guardianship is raised. It has been about nine or ten years since we have had any poor, and when we have had any we have taken them to the house of some member of the tribe, and they haven't lasted us long.

MR. ADAMS.—What do you think the members of the tribe would be willing to take for their interest in the public land?

MR. THOMAS.—Well, I call them \$1, as near as I can remember them; and I think divide \$5,000 by \$1, it would be about \$60. I think they would be willing to take that. It would be a pretty fair divide.

MR. ADAMS.—I would like to hear from Mr. Brister Michael.

MR. BRISTER MICHAEL.—My opinion is a good deal like the other Councilmen. It don't make much difference to me about the State. If they see fit to raise the guardianship, I would be satisfied with that, or would be satisfied to remain as I am. I can get a living, and it don't make much difference to me whether I am a citizen or not. If the State should see fit to sell the land, I think the money should be

paid to the heads of families. If the State should sell the property, I think each one that is of age should receive his money, whether it be more or less.

MR. WM. D. CROSS.—I feel somewhat interested in this matter. I was one of the persons appointed by the Town Council to meet you, and I have no particular interest in the tribe or the State one more than another, but it seems to me that this matter that the General Assembly has taken hold of is a matter that, if it is carried through, will make expense, and bring no benefit to themselves or the tribe. The tribe now get their own living and support their own poor, and probably they will do no more if the guardianship is raised and the property sold. Those of the tribe that are disposed to be men will be so whether the guardianship is raised or not. The school question is a very important one, and in my opinion the tribal school should be abolished and the children attend the other schools. That, in my opinion, is the salvation of this tribe.

In regard to the question of selling the land, I think Mr. Thomas has talked about the matter very reasonably. The land would bring nearly nothing. Nobody wants it. The land is worth very little to either the tribe or the town. Very little land in our town is of any value, and especially this; and it would cost more than the town of Charlestown is worth to cut a decent road through this section, and where it is going to I don't know. I don't see any earthly benefit that the State is going to get. If the tribe is abolished somebody has got to support the poor of this tribe, and it is very evident to me that there will be quite a percentage of this tribe that will need support. It has not been satisfactorily explained to me where this expense is coming. As a member of the town of Charlestown I am somewhat interested financially, and one question in my mind is whether the town of Charlestown will have to support the paupers of this tribe. I think it would be a matter of injustice to force this tribe off of their land, and I don't think they would receive any benefit from it. If they want to stay here, I think they ought to be allowed that privilege. I see no earthly benefit that can come from abolishing this tribe, and I think if a vote was taken through the town, that there would be a large majority against abolishing the tribe.

MR. CARPENTER.—If the State should decide to let the tribal relations remain as they are, and you already understand that they have agreed that it would be for the best interest of the tribe to abolish the

school, would the town of Charlestown be willing to take those children into its schools, and under what conditions?

MR. CROSS.—I am not prepared to answer that question. I don't live in the district where they would be liable to come. I should think that in one district where there is liable to be a large attendance there would be some opposition, but I haven't concluded that the districts as a whole would object. In the school at the four corners I think there would be a good attendance of the colored children, and I wouldn't be surprised if there was objection in that district; but in the other districts I think not.

Adjourned to the call of the chairman.



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